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FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS

OF

PENNSYLVANIA,

FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR ENDING JUNE 1, 1848.

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BY TOWNSEND HAINES, SUPERINTENDENT.

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## LETTER.

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SECRETARY'S OFFICE, }  
*Harrisburg January 13, 1849.* }

To his Excellency, WILLIAM F. JOHNSTON,  
*Governor of Pennsylvania:*

SIR:—In obedience to the directions of the eighteenth section of the act of the 24th of March, 1843, I have the honor herewith to deliver to you the report of the Superintendent of Common Schools, for the year ending June 5, 1848.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

TOWNSEND HAINES,  
*Sec'y of Commonwealth and Supt. of Com. Schools.*

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# REPORT.

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SECRETARY'S OFFICE, SCHOOL DEPARTMENT, }  
Harrisburg, January, 1849. }

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:*

GENTLEMEN:—By an act of the General Assembly of this Commonwealth, entitled “An Act to consolidate and amend the several acts relative to a general system of education by common schools,” passed the 13th day of June, 1836, it is made the duty of the Superintendent to prepare and submit to the Legislature, an annual report containing a statement of the condition of the common schools throughout the Commonwealth, estimates and expenditures, plans for the improvement of the common school system, and all such matters relating to the office of Superintendent, and the concerns of common schools, as he shall deem it expedient to communicate.

In performing the duty required by law, the Superintendent would remark that, holding his position by an appointment posterior to the ending of the school year upon which his report is required, his knowledge in relation to the condition of the common schools, during the past year, must be limited. It has been, however, a source of pleasure, since taking his place at the head of this department, to endeavor to obtain information sufficient to enable him to communicate to the Legislature, in accordance with the requirements of the law; and he has reason to hope the report will contain matters of interest to your honorable bodies.

No subject within the range of human action deserves a larger share of public attention, than rational and moral education. It is the sure basis of every active virtue. It is the prolific soil from which spring the graces, as well as the solid enjoyments of mental existence. In whatever condition man may be placed; whatever his fortune or destiny, a liberal education, including sound moral instruction, is a guiding star in his pilgrimage of life, enlightening his pathway, elevating his character, qualifying him for usefulness, while it enables him to conquer adversity, to alleviate misfortune, and to enjoy the pleasures unmingled with the vices of the world. Under a republican government, whose best security is public virtue, where, with proper encouragement, industry is rewarded with independence, and where no artificial barriers interpose between poverty and riches, between obscurity and distinction, more especially should a system of education be maintained. Where private happiness and public security are promoted by the same means, a people neglectful of their support would be doubly culpable.

Somewhat tardy in the commencement of a system for the encouragement of education, the State began the work with an evident determination to gain, if possible, in energy, what had been lost by delay. By an act of Assembly, passed the second day of April, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-one, entitled “An Act providing for the establishment of a general system of education,” all moneys due and owing this Commonwealth by the holders of unpatented lands; also, all moneys secured to the Commonwealth by mortgage or lien on land, for the purchase money of the same; also, all moneys paid to the State Treasurer on any application hereafter entered, on any warrant hereafter issued, or any patent hereafter granted for land, as also all fees received in the Land Office, as well as all moneys received in pursuance of the provisions of the fourth section of an act, entitled “An Act to increase the county rates and



levies for the use of the Commonwealth," approved the 25th day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-one, were set apart as a common school fund, and the moneys arising therefrom to be held by the Commonwealth, for the use of the common school fund, at an interest of five per cent.; and that the interest of the moneys belonging to the said fund, should be added to the principal until the interest thereof should amount to the sum of one hundred thousand dollars annually; after which event, the interest should be distributed and applied to the support of common schools.

Anticipating the period fixed for the distribution of the interest arising from the fund, the Legislature, by an act, entitled "An Act to establish a general system of education by common schools," approved the first day of April, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-four, divided the State into divisions and districts; made an appropriation of seventy-five thousand dollars, out of the school fund for the succeeding year, and provided that the same amount should be annually thereafter appropriated and paid, until the year when the school fund should yield an interest of one hundred thousand dollars annually. The law further provided for levying a tax in the different districts, not less than double the appropriation from the State; and it nominated the Secretary of the Commonwealth, the Superintendent of Common Schools.

This law gave the first direction to the school fund, and pointed out the mode by which the system of common schools was proposed to be carried into effect. As might have been expected in the creation of a plan which was untried, and which changed the entire principles of all former laws, it was found in many particulars quite defective. To provide remedies for discovered evils, an act was passed the thirteenth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, which appropriated the sum of two hundred thousand dollars annually thereafter, to be apportioned among the several school districts of the Commonwealth, and the city and county of Philadelphia, according to the number of taxable inhabitants; and authorized the directors to levy a tax on their respective districts, not less than equal to, nor more than treble the amount which the district should be entitled to receive out of the annual State appropriation. It gave authority also to the said directors, should the amount authorized to be raised be deemed insufficient, to call meetings of the taxables in their several districts, a majority of whom might give to the directors power to increase the tax. The important provisions of this statute are still in force. Other acts, varying unimportant features, were subsequently passed, some of which were afterwards repealed; and as it is intended to call the attention of the Legislature to a portion of one not in force, it will be proper in this connection to refer to it. On the twelfth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight, a supplement to the act of one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, was passed, which added to the appropriation of the former law, the sum of one hundred and eight thousand nine hundred and nineteen dollars, and provided that such sum annually thereafter should be made, as would be equal to one dollar for each taxable citizen in the Commonwealth. The clause in this law above referred to, has been repealed, while other salutary provisions remain in force, and aid materially the practical operation of the system. It is not deemed necessary, in this place, to refer to the several acts which changed or modified particular parts of the law of one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, unless to call the attention of the Legislature to the propriety of a careful revision, and consolidation of the several acts now in force on the subject. By the act of April the eleventh, one thousand eight hundred and forty-eight, it is provided "that the common school system, from and after the passage of this act, shall be deemed, held and taken to be adopted by the several school districts in this Commonwealth; and that the school directors of the respective school districts from which the undrawn school appropriations were taken by the act of the twenty-ninth of April, one thousand eight hundred and forty-four, entitled "An Act to reduce the State debt, and to incorporate the Pennsylvania canal and railroad company," shall, during the month of May, of the present year, levy and assess a tax as required by existing laws, to enable the school districts to receive their portion of the State appropriation; and each of the said school districts in which a tax shall be so levied and assessed as aforesaid, shall thereupon receive its portion of the said appropriation of two hundred thousand dollars, and shall be entitled to a deduction



of twenty-five per cent. of all moneys paid into the county treasury by such district for State purposes, during the two next ensuing school years; which money so deducted, shall be paid to the treasurer of the board of school directors of such school district, and shall be exclusively appropriated to the erection of school houses in such school districts.

By this act the school system is extended over the entire State, and is hereafter to be considered as embracing every county and district in the Commonwealth. Some, it is believed, will not be satisfied with the restraint of free will, by the provisions of this law, but their number must be inconsiderable, when compared with those who willingly accept it; and where a system is applicable alike to all, no sound reason can be devised why it should be partial in its operation. While, however, the law imposes for their benefit the system upon the citizens, it offers to them one-fourth of the State tax raised in their districts for the purpose of erecting school houses. Unfortunately, the law was passed at a time rendering a literal compliance with its provisions in regard to levying and assessing "a tax as required by existing laws," impossible; and hence, those districts which would have been entitled to twenty-five per cent. of the State tax raised within their districts respectively, have not been able legally to demand this allowance. A law extending the time to two years from the first-day of April next, would afford the opportunity required by the districts, and would carry out the intentions of the Legislature. When it is recollected that the act of 8th of April, 1843, took from these districts the undrawn school appropriations, to which they had been entitled, it is believed no one will hesitate to carry out the intentions of the act of 11th of April, 1848, by an extension of time in the above particular, and the same is hereby recommended.

Since the passage of the act of the 1st of April, 1834, upwards of three millions of dollars have been appropriated by the State for school purposes, while the citizens, seconding the efforts of the Legislature, have raised by taxation the sum of five millions for similar objects. It is not pretended that these sums are the precise amounts appropriated in support of the system of common schools, but they approximate them sufficiently close to afford a view of the energy with which the State has pursued its design, and of the hearty co-operation of a large portion of the people therein.

The following tabular statement will afford a condensed view of the operation of the system for the year ending June 1, 1848:

Whole number of districts, -	-	-	-	-	-	1,306
Number paid during the year, -	-	-	-	-	-	1,153
Number reporting, -	-	-	-	-	-	1,102
Whole number of schools, -	-	-	-	-	-	7,845
Number yet required, -	-	-	-	-	-	486
Average number of months taught, -	-	-	-	-	-	4.24½
Number of male teachers, -	-	-	-	-	-	6,065
Number of female teachers, -	-	-	-	-	-	3,031
Number of male scholars, -	-	-	-	-	-	197,984
" female scholars, -	-	-	-	-	-	162,621
" scholars learning German, -	-	-	-	-	-	6,931
Average number of scholars in each school, -	-	-	-	-	-	44
Average salaries of male teachers per month, -	-	-	-	-	-	\$17 37
" female teachers per month, -	-	-	-	-	-	10 65
Cost of teaching each scholar per month, -	-	-	-	-	-	45½
Amount of tax levied, -	-	-	-	-	-	508,696 51
Received from State appropriation, -	-	-	-	-	-	193,035 75
Received from collectors of school tax, -	-	-	-	-	-	392,442 56
Cost of school houses, repairing, &c., -	-	-	-	-	-	96,539 47

From the reports received in the office of the Superintendent, for the year 1848, it will appear that since the report for the year ending June, 1847, there has been an increase in the number of districts, of fifty-seven; in the number paid, of ninety-nine; in the number reporting, of fifty-four; in the number of schools, of five hundred and



twenty-five; in the number of teachers, of four hundred and twenty-two; in the number of scholars, of twenty-eight thousand six hundred and thirty-eight; and in the amount of tax levied, of seventy-one thousand nine hundred sixty-eight dollars and seventy-one cents. A full statement of the condition of the system will be found in the table accompanying this report.

One important fact is exhibited in the foregoing condensed statement—that the average time during which the schools are kept open, is something less than five months. This is an evil of no trifling character, and should, if possible, be speedily removed. Schools to be useful, should be kept open for at least ten months in the year. A lad taken from his amusements and placed in a school, is uneasy with the loss of his enjoyments, is restless from the restraint he experiences, and feels the bench and the book a punishment from which he is most anxious to escape. Weeks will pass away before he understands his position, and feels at ease in his employment. The teacher is also embarrassed with his ignorance of the acquirements of his scholar, the nature and extent of his studies, the dispositions of the pupils, and time is required to classify them in a manner suitable to their habits and learning. Before he has made arrangements satisfactory to himself, one-fourth of the period for which he has engaged is gone, and his school has made no progress. At the end of five months, the scholars are dismissed to their former entertainments, of which they partake with a relish heightened by long abstinence, and a large part of the little they have learned is soon forgotten. Seven months of recreation pass away, the school opens, and the pupil is brought back to his bench and book, to undergo the same uneasiness of body and mind, the same sensation of punishment, and with almost equal ignorance of learning. Thus pass away the years which should be devoted to study, the period when impressions are more readily made on the mind, and when knowledge is stored away for future usefulness; and the lad finds himself thrown out on the world, incapable of relishing the enjoyments of learning, of seeking, in the many new paths now open to the citizen, a road to independence, chained down to the narrow circle allotted to the uninstructed, and finding in physical enjoyments a miserable solace for unimproved youth. To add to the evils of short terms, the schools are kept open during the winter months, when the weather is most inclement, and the younger scholar rarely finds himself in a condition to partake of their doubtful benefits. The days are short, the school house is crowded, the large and the small mingle together in admirable confusion, and the younger classes do not receive the attention they require.

Another objection to the practice of closing the schools at the end of five months, arises from the difficulties experienced under such circumstances, of obtaining a competent teacher. A man who has made himself adequate to the task of instruction, and is ready to adopt it as his employment, will not be willing to engage for a small portion of the year, and seek in other resources a precarious support, when the term of his service is expired. Such a teacher will forsake the country school, and find refuge from a system that denies a maintenance, in the villages and towns where better terms are obtained. The consequence necessarily is, that teachers, in no way qualified by habits, disposition or learning; whose regular employments are suspended during the winter months, and who are willing to profit by the opportunity to maintain themselves through the inclement season, are engaged in the difficult duty of rational and moral instruction. Such instances are frequently the cause of serious dissatisfaction among parents and directors, and of complaints to the Superintendent. A teacher should himself be taught. He should be educated for the profession of teacher, with at least as great care as is required in any other trade, occupation or profession. He should not only be acquainted with the rudiments of English education, and the best mode of imparting instruction to the pupil, but he should be disciplined in sound morals, in correct habits, and in the control of his own passions, before his instruction to the scholar can be useful. While such a result cannot be speedily effected, and might be deemed by some hopeless, it should be a standard, to which a close approximation might be made, highly desirable to every friend of education.

Parents who are forced by their condition, to employ the young energies of their children in laborious duties, and who, while anxious for their education, feel the neces-



sity of their support, should remember that, ten months of consecutive application to learning, will afford opportunity for acquirements which could not be obtained in many years under existing customs. One year of constant attention to study, would furnish the ardent mind of youth with the elements of learning, would open to the scholar an unknown world, in which, whatever his employments, he would undesignedly wander, to gather the flowers now so profusely scattered along his pathway, and would spare to the helpless parent, a large part of his minority for useful practical duties.

The items of salaries to teachers, should receive public attention. The foregoing table gives the average salary of male tutors per month at seventeen dollars and thirty-seven cents, and of females at ten dollars and sixty-five cents. As these sums merely mark the *average* prices, they do not afford a just view of the subject, inasmuch as in many districts the salaries paid, rise above a medium, while in a large majority of the townships they fall below it. The reports to the department afford evidence that in many of the districts, not more than six dollars per month are given to females, and twelve dollars to males.

A system for the support of education, which relies on prices so inadequate to the object, is not only defective, but cannot continue, unless a change is effected in this important particular. When the field for manly enterprize in this yet "new world" is daily extending—when developments in arts and sciences call for the employment of skill and learning—while the spinning-jenny, the workshop, and the mines, yield competence to the laborer—while along the internal improvements of the State, the toll house, the water station, and the lock, furnish a more profitable reward—it cannot be expected that teachers, capable of the task, will be found willing to undertake, for such disproportionate recompense, the difficult duty of the education of youth. In a country where the *pen* is more potent than the *sword*, it soon understands its worth, and must be purchased at its value.

Other defects in the practical operation of the system are discernable, which, although of minor importance, require legislative interference. Where the tax authorized to be raised is insufficient for the wants of a district, as is frequently the case, recourse must be had to the authority given to the directors, to call meetings of the taxable inhabitants, to decide by ballot what additional sum shall be raised for school purposes; and when this fails, the township is left without funds for the support of the schools. When districts and sub-districts contain but few taxables, resort to this precarious method of raising tax, must be made annually.

The following instance will exemplify: A district contains thirty taxables, the State appropriation would therefore be fifteen dollars, and the maximum amount of tax, forty-five dollars: making together, sixty dollars. A sum so inconsiderable would fail in furnishing fuel, meeting contingencies, and keeping a school open, even at the low rate of salaries, for any respectable period of time. That this instance may not be deemed extraordinary, the following table taken from the reports in the department, is given.

Districts.	Counties.	Taxables.
Fox, - - -	Clearfield, - - -	16
Spring Creek, - - -	Elk, - - -	20
Tionesta, - - -	Jefferson, - - -	10
West Branch, - - -	Potter, - - -	15
Jackson, - - -	do. - - -	7
Portage, - - -	do. - - -	9
Pleasant Valley, - - -	do. - - -	17
Cherry Grove, - - -	Warren, - - -	10
Corydon, - - -	M'Kean, - - -	11
Hamlin, - - -	do. - - -	21

In all of these districts, so far as reports have reached the department, the tax raised for school purposes more than trebles the State appropriation.

It is suggested that these district meetings, for the purpose of obtaining authority to raise additional tax, is not the best mode of supplying absolute wants. With existing



enactments, the whims, caprice, ill will towards directors, or teachers, of a few individuals, may defeat the best intentions, and close the schools of a district. The directors should have the authority of law to raise such an amount of tax, as in the exercise of a sound discretion, would be adequate to school purposes. No danger need be apprehended from the exercise of such authority. The directors are a part of the people of the district, are liable to the same burthens, have constant intercourse with the citizens, and not only know, but feel their wants, their abilities, and their dispositions in relation to taxation. Chosen by the citizens of the district, they hold their trust without reward, for a limited period, and should their zeal in the cause outrun discretion, their places can be readily filled with others, whose opinions better accord with the views of the majority.

A continual source of strife and complaint is manifested between directors and committees of sub-districts. So far as the causes of difficulties could be discovered, the directors were generally correct, and the complaints groundless. These dissensions proceed from differences of opinion in relation to the legal rights of the parties, over the school house and grounds, over the appointment, examination and control of the teacher, and in regard to the share of State appropriation to which each is entitled. The directors, however, are sometimes in the wrong, and in one instance, if reliance could be placed on the truth of the facts disclosed, the injustice to the sub-district was so apparent, the Superintendent deemed it his duty to withhold the appropriation due to the district, until, on notice given, satisfactory evidence should be furnished of the falsity of the charge. It is not perceived why the sub-districts should not be governed by directors elected by themselves alone, instead of the control of their school being thrown into the hands of men chosen by the whole township. No additional expense would be incurred were each school erected into a district. The laws in relation to these causes of complaints are so well expressed, and explain so clearly the rights and duties of directors and committees, that it is thought a jealousy of the authority conferred on directors, rather than ignorance of their power, produces these unfortunate collisions. Why should they not have separate organizations? Such an arrangement would give to the sub-districts the control of their schools, houses, teachers, tax and appropriations, and could not fail to prevent similar causes of complaint. An inherent difficulty in regard to districts and sub-districts arises from the usual inequality of taxables. Suppose the case of a district containing one hundred taxables and a sub-district with not more than fifty taxables—both schools are governed by the directors chosen by the votes of a majority of the whole township. The State appropriation and the tax must be divided between these, in a way to do the least injustice. An equal dividend would have the effect of taxing the larger, for the benefit of the smaller, and would give it an advantage in the fund, while to the portion of the township paying the greater amount of tax, the effect would be to burthen it with a tax, the benefits of which were bestowed on others. Any other distribution would be greatly injurious to the sub-district. A pro rata proportion, which is frequently adopted, destroys the school in the sub-district, by furnishing it with a fund insufficient for its wants. The directors, however obnoxious to the sub-district, can be re-elected against the consent of its taxables, and can with entire impunity perpetrate acts of injustice against its interests. The instances of this character, which have reached the department, are rare, yet enough to call special attention to the subject. Were the districts divided, and each allowed to stand on its own organization, the sub-district, more heavily taxed, would find a recompense for additional burthens in the independence of its condition, and the satisfaction of being governed by its own representatives.

Large districts, it is obvious, are less expensive to the individual tax-payers than small ones. The system of classifying the scholars, renders the duties of a teacher equally effective whether the school be large or small, and hence the importance of preserving the district entire, wherever the extent of territory will warrant it. For this purpose, school houses should be so constructed as to admit of the greatest reasonable number of pupils, and with this view, care should be taken to have them properly lighted, ventilated and warmed. The health of the scholar through life may depend on the propriety of these auxiliaries.



At the last session of the Legislature an act was passed, by which the directors of the school districts in the Commonwealth, were authorized to refuse admission into the public schools, of children under the age of five years. A provision giving power to the directors to refuse admission, also, to persons *over* a certain age, would prevent impositions frequently practised on directors and teachers. Instances are not rare of adults, above the age of twenty-one years, claiming the privilege of admission, and occupying the time and attention of the teacher in the higher branches of English learning. The spirit of the laws on the subject, and the design of the system of common schools, forbid a use of this kind of its invaluable privileges.

It is believed that the act requiring the directors of every school district in the State, to make a report of the amount of tax levied in the respective districts, before the Superintendent is authorized to draw his warrant on the State Treasurer for the whole amount such district is entitled to receive, is fraudulently evaded; and that after having issued the warrant for the collection of the tax, and a certificate thereof having been forwarded to the Superintendent, the warrant is frequently withdrawn from the hands of the collector, and the tax never demanded. Evasions of this character, by which the district is enabled to obtain its share of the State appropriation without performing the duties required by law, should be prevented; and the subject is therefore submitted to the wisdom of the Legislature.

While these evils *embarrass* the progress of education, other defects strike at the vital energies of the scheme itself. The former are ephemeral in their nature, having their source in ancient prejudices and established habits, which must eventually wear away in their attrition with truth; whereas, those about to be suggested, are in their nature deep-seated and permanent, strengthening in the weakness, and nourished by the failing energies of the system. The *want of funds*, and the *apathy of the people*, should be provided against by every means within the power of the Legislature. Happily in the condition of things, evils which appear most formidable are frequently most readily overcome. This truth is strikingly exemplified in the case under consideration. No difficulty should exist, in raising an amount of money, equal to the rational want of the system of common schools. The whole fabric rests on the shoulders of the people, to them is allotted its support and efficiency, and for their benefit are its blessings conferred. They have the power to place it in a position in which it cannot be shaken by factitious commotion, nor undermined by indifference, and where it will command respect, even from the most hostile.

It is not proposed to recommend additional appropriations. These are drawn from a treasury supplied by taxation, which, for causes difficult to remove, is not equal and uniform in all portions of the State. Neither ought they to be diminished. A wise policy would for the present, leave them where they are, in the hands of the Superintendent, a check to injustice, an excitement to apathy, and a reward for well doing.

Under existing laws, it unfortunately happens that, as the ratio of appropriation diminishes, the tax in the districts is also diminished. Hence every additional accepting district, by reducing the ratio of appropriation, and thereby preventing to that extent the assessment of tax therein, has been a source of injury to those which had previously adopted the system. The ratio for 1848 was fifty cents; the ratio for 1849 is forty-three cents; and, as by the act of April, 1848, the system of common schools is extended over the whole State, the ratio of 1850, will not exceed forty cents. Where a district contains thirty taxables, it would be entitled under the ratio of fifty cents, to an appropriation of fifteen dollars, which, by means of "treble" taxation, might be increased to sixty dollars; whereas, under the ratio of forty cents, the appropriation and tax united, could not exceed forty-eight dollars. Instead, therefore, of the school fund, in the different districts increasing in amount, the extension of the system diminishes it, unless a precarious resort be had to meetings of the citizens with a view to authorize additional taxation. The passage of a law to prevent the ruinous effects of decreasing revenues for school purposes, is earnestly recommended.

By the act of the 12th of April, 1838, it was provided that, "after the expiration of the school year, which will commence on the first Monday of June, eighteen hun-



dred and thirty-eight, the amount necessary to raise the State appropriation to a sum equal to one dollar for each taxable citizen in the Commonwealth, shall be annually paid out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated." While this law was in force, the school fund, by reason of the authority of the directors to raise a tax to treble the amount of the appropriation, was ample for all purposes of education. The increase of school districts, together with the embarrassments of the Treasury, produced a repeal of this section, and the appropriation was reduced, carrying down with it in the decreasing scale the tax in the districts. From that point of time, the school fund has been annually diminishing, until it has reached a minimum, calculated to produce results alarming to the friends of education. It has been seen that, in a district containing thirty taxables, the amount of funds at the control of the directors, under the ratio of forty cents, is forty-eight dollars. The same district, under the provisions of the laws in force in eighteen hundred and thirty-eight, could have commanded one hundred and twenty dollars. Should the Legislature deem it proper to change existing provisions on the subject, it is suggested that a fair basis for the amount of tax to be raised in the several districts, would be the standard authorized by the act of the 12th of April, 1838. In the event of a change to this effect of existing laws, it would be necessary to separate the connection between the appropriation and the tax, so far as to make the amount of the one independent of the amount of the other. The appropriation would remain as it is, with a ratio slowly decreasing by the increase of taxables, while the standard of the tax being permanently not less than one dollar, and not more than three dollars for every taxable in the district, would increase with the growth of population. The passage of a law having for its object the foregoing results, is respectfully and earnestly recommended.

The plan here proposed carries no evils in its train. It returns to the system of common schools a portion of the energy which was lost by the repeal of the first and second sections of the act of the 12th of April, eighteen hundred and thirty-eight; thereby establishing as the minimum of tax authorized to be raised for school purposes hereafter, a standard which approaches the maximum now warranted for the same objects. It obviates the necessity of a resort to township meetings, always equivocal and uncertain, by enabling directors to raise in their respective districts, within a prescribed limit, an amount of tax sufficient for all reasonable school purposes. Should the tax be considered unnecessarily burthensome, the districts will have the power to reduce it to the lowest amount named, and the directors under present laws, can exceed this sum in the exercise of the authority to raise treble the amount of State appropriation.

The benefits to result from a change of this nature in the laws governing the subject, can scarcely be imagined. Schools, now closed from six to nine months in the year, could be kept open for ten months annually—children running idle and wasting the period of youth in associations often-times pernicious, would have an opportunity of laying deep in their memories, the solid fabric of future enjoyment and usefulness—teachers, male and female, with acquirements, habits and dispositions, qualifying them to mingle in the draught of learning, the unseen elements of virtue, would rise up to fill the place of the vulgar and licentious—apathy would be aroused—jealousies and discontents would disappear—parents would be delighted with the improvement of their offspring, and, in a few short years, the system now laboring with innumerable difficulties, would be wreathed with the affections of the people.

The indifference of the citizens, is also a serious evil. Little care is taken, and small is the anxiety felt on the subject of education. Men do not generally appreciate its worth, and are satisfied with such acquirements as will enable the possessor to write his name, and roughly to keep his accounts. Hence, in many places, no attention is bestowed on the schools, the teacher, or the scholar; the directors are left to manage them in their own way, and even in the selection of these officers, little regard is paid to their qualifications, and less to the performance of their duties. It cannot be expected that those who are ignorant of the treasures of education, should place a high value on the means to attain it. Where no sheaves have been gathered in the stubble of learning, the refreshing influences of the speechless dew,



will not be perceived. To arouse public attention on the subject of common schools—to impart to parents, as far as possible, a knowledge of the invaluable blessings of sound instruction, and the importance of the system to the future welfare of their children, should be the aim of the Legislature, and the effort of every good citizen.

A beneficial effect in this particular, would be exerted from additional taxation in the school districts. Not only would the condition of the schools, the improvement of the scholar, and the order and harmony of the scheme, awaken a lively sense of well founded regard; but the increased amount of money raised, could not fail to attach a deeper interest in its success. *Where our treasure is, there our hearts are also.* The influence of this pervading principle, must startle even the sluggishness of indifference, and attract the attention of the unconcerned. Other methods, however, should not be left untried. School journals and public lectures, have been used in other States, with singular success, and would here doubtless, be strong auxiliaries to reform. The public press throughout the State would find it their interest to devote a column periodically to the subject of education. Ministers of the Gospel could exert an influence, which might reach every fireside, *opening the eyes of the blind, and unstopping the deaf ears*, on the subject of rational and moral instruction.

The apathy of parents in regard to the education of their children, although the result of ignorance of its benefits, is lamentably mischievous. Did they know that a higher tone of morality and religion attended a cultivated intellect; that the past afforded its lessons of instruction, and the future its hopes of reward, with deeper solemnity, and brighter colors—did they know that learning, even in its elements, opened the vista which leads with irresistible impulse to the Throne of Omnipotence—were they conscious of the higher energies of the human mind, when awakened with a draught from the fountains of knowledge, and could they see the “ladder set upon the earth, and the top reaching to heaven”—were they conscious that the little rill from which their offspring drank the rudiments of education, widened and deepened in its progress, until earth and sky were reflected from its bosom—were they capable of understanding the untold wealth in the treasury of knowledge, they would tear from their sleeping energies the leaden weight of insensibility; their hearts would expand with strange affection for their children; no sacrifice of wealth, or time, or attention, would be deemed prodigal, until they had unbarred the prison door of ignorance, and given liberty to the immortal spirit.

Were a sound intelligence on this subject spread among the people, no further efforts would be required. Perhaps no more efficient agent for this purpose can be found, than periodical conventions of teachers in the different counties. A system of this kind has been introduced into New York, Ohio, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont and Connecticut, and the advantages in many points of view have exceeded expectation. The conventions in Connecticut were held under the direction of individuals appointed by the Superintendent, of “established reputation for sound practical views on the theory and practice of teaching,” who made report of their proceedings to the head of the school department, who submitted them to the Legislature. One of these reports embodies such a fund of information on the different branches of common school learning, and contains so much useful knowledge in relation to the teacher, parent and scholar, that it has been deemed proper to append it to this report, as worthy of general circulation.

By a resolution of the General Assembly, passed March 15, 1847, it was provided “That the Secretary of the Commonwealth be and he is hereby authorized to loan to Rufus L. Barnes, and William E. Morris, the plates of the State map, now in the Bank of Pennsylvania, for the purpose of correcting the said plates, by adding thereto the new counties, townships, and other recent improvements, and late statistical information, and issuing a new edition of the map. *Provided*, The Commonwealth shall be at no expense for such additions and alterations. *And provided further*, That said Barnes and Morris shall furnish the State with as many maps from said plates as may be required for the public schools of the Commonwealth for the next three years, at three dollars each, delivered in Philadelphia; the maps to be colored, varnished and mounted on rollers. *And provided further*, That security shall be given to the Com-



monwealth, satisfactory to the Secretary of State, for the return of such plates at the end of three years as aforesaid. *Provided*, That before any impressions shall be made of said map, a proof impression shall be submitted to, and receive the approbation of the county board, consisting of the members from the city and county of Philadelphia."

In pursuance of the provisions of the foregoing resolution, the plates were loaned to the said Barnes and Morris, the contemplated corrections were made, a proof impression was submitted to, and received the approbation of the county board, and the said Barnes and Morris, being prepared to furnish to the State, for the use of the public schools, such number of maps as may be deemed necessary, await the action of the Legislature in relation to the quantity to be supplied.

The expense of furnishing a map to every school within the Commonwealth, will be little short of thirty thousand dollars. The number of schools reporting is nearly eight thousand, and it is believed that when the act of one thousand eight hundred and forty-eight, which extends the system over the State, is brought into complete operation, there will be two thousand added to the list. Should an appropriation of this amount be considered improper in the embarrassed condition of the Treasury, a map for each school district might be obtained for the sum of five thousand dollars. While it is not perceived with what justice a distinction of this character can be made between the different schools, the expenditure of thirty thousand dollars cannot, with proper attention to other interests, be recommended. The subject is referred to the attention of the Legislature.

In closing this report, it is proper to remark, that the duties of the department were assumed at a point of time affording little opportunity to examine its details, or to become acquainted with its defects. To this circumstance, rather than to a want of zeal in the cause of education by common schools, should be attributed the imperfect character of the labor.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

TOWNSEND HAINES,  
*Superintendent of Common Schools.*



COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE SYSTEM SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1835.

SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

DATE.	DISTRICTS.				SCHOOLS.		TEACHERS.			SCHOLARS.			RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURES.	
	Whole No. of districts.	No. of accepting districts.	No. of districts paid.	No. of districts reported.	Whole No. of schools.	Length of time schools were open.	Whole No. of teachers.	Average salaries of male teachers per month.	Average salaries of female teachers per month.	Whole No. of scholars.	Average number in each school.	Average cost of teaching each scholar per yr.	State appropriation to accepting districts.	Tax levied in accepting districts.	For school houses.	For instruction, fuel and contingencies.
1835,	907	536	-	156	762	3m 12d	808	-	-	32,544	-	1.12½	Unknown.	-	-	-
1836,	987	745	603	573	3384	4 , 3	3394	\$18 34	\$11 96	139,604	41	1.06	\$98,670 54	\$207,105 37	\$111,803.01	\$193,972.90
1837,	1001	796	765	664	4089	6 , 0½	4841	18 89¼	11 79½	182,355	42½	1.27½	463,749 55	231,552 36	202,230.52	493,071.39
1838,	1033	861	820	628	3939	5 , 18	5034	18 95	11 30	174,733	41¾	1.39½	323,794 92	385,788 00	149,132.23	560,450.69
1839,	1050	879	857	633	3152	5 , 8	4666	19 39½	12 03	181,913	41½	1.36½	276,826 92	382,527 89	161,384.06	579,162.78
1840,	1050	879	867	633	3152	5 , 8	4666	19 39½	12 03	181,913	41½	1.36½	264,536 66	395,918 00	161,384.06	580,262.63
1841,	1072	902	885	734	5179	5 , 7	6086	18 91	11 45	227,699	44	1.26	249,400 84	397,952 01	123,004.19	524,348.66
1842,	1113	905	905	861	6116	5 , 9	7494	18 58	11 16	281,085	44	1.27	250,065 00	398,766 40	119,006.74	489,872.58
1843,	1139	945	945	865	6156	5 , 14½	7594	17 54	11 06	288,762	45	1.21	272,720 00	419,307 61	92,749.01	484,454.12
1844,	1172	939	939	846	5993	5 , 15	7585	16 88½	10 41	288,402	44	1.15	264,520 00	391,340 68	75,918.94	470,228.36
1845,	1189	1012	1018	961	6690	4 , 00	8031	16 47⅔	9 46½	327,418	44	1.25	*192,813 44	370,774 15	77,173.28	375,982.22
1846,	1225	1067	1056	994	7096	5 , 1	8468	16 69½	9 92¼	329,805	45	1.23	*186,417 86	406,740 42	60,960.67	486,475.74
1847,	1249	1105	1054	1048	7320	4 , 22	8674	16 73	10 20	331,967	45½	1.26	*187,269 50	436,727 80	60,410.82	487,201.51
1848,	1330	1330	1129	1078	7845	4 , 24½	9096	17 37	10 65	360,605	44	1.36½	193,035 75	501,681 17	96,539.47	505,505.97

\*In these items, the appropriations to the city and county of Philadelphia are included, viz: for 1845, \$31,557 14, and for 1846-'47 & '48, \$32,202, each.



## APPENDIX.

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*Report of Merrill Richardson, appointed by the Superintendent of Common Schools, in Connecticut, to hold conventions or schools for teachers in several counties of the State.*

Having performed the labor assigned me by you in the *State Temporary Normal Schools*, I submit to you the following report:—

The schools were fully attended, and the audiences at the evening addresses were large. With the exception of the school at New London, more than one hundred teachers were present at each place of meeting, and the number of citizens who attended the more public exercises, ranged from two to five hundred.

The schools were opened on Tuesday morning, and usually continued in session till Saturday noon of the same week. Six hours of each day were occupied in giving instruction, and in the illustration of the best methods of teaching all the branches of study commonly taught in the district schools of this State. The evenings were spent in addresses and discussions upon all those topics which have a direct bearing upon the prosperity of our system of public instruction. Citizens of the place and gentlemen from towns adjoining participated in these discussions. On the part of both teachers and citizens there was manifested a high degree of interest, as attested by the increasing numbers who attended the exercises of both day and evening, and their frequent and not unequivocal expressions.

At Middletown, Tolland, Norwich, Goshen and Farmington, the citizens had appointed a committee to receive the teachers, and assign them board and lodgings free of charge; and the teachers expressed their warmest thanks for the kindness and hospitality thus extended to them. We were unfortunate in the time of holding the school at New London, as several exciting subjects were occupying the attention of the people. About forty teachers however were in attendance, and several of the citizens took an interest in the exercises.

In presenting to you a detailed account of the proceedings of these conventions, it will not be necessary to take up each one by itself. This would occupy too much time, and would prove a useless repetition. The system of instruction was essentially the same in all of them, and by giving this in full, the object of my report will be accomplished. I would only state in this place that at Middletown, where several gentlemen whom you had appointed to conduct the schools in different parts of the State, met to mature a plan of operation, there was less of system in the exercises than at other places. This was a necessary result of having so many to take part in them, who had never labored together in a work of this character; and also from the circumstance that the students from the college, who composed a large part of the convention, could not be present only the first two days. The following report will embrace the doings of the convention at Middletown, Tolland, New London, Norwich, Goshen and Farmington. Rev. Messrs. Chapin, Smith and Norton, Messrs. Allen, Root and Camp conducted different exercises at Middletown; Mr. Allen assisted at Tolland, New London and Farmington; Mr. Hiscock at Norwich; Mr. Rockwell at Goshen.

### I.

#### METHODS OF TEACHING.

Reading, grammar, spelling, geography, mental and written arithmetic, writing, drawing, singing, punctuation, physiology, pronunciation, teaching the alphabet, slate



and black board exercises for small scholars, the arrangement and classification of schools, the kind of studies best adapted to develop the minds of scholars at all ages,—these were the topics for the day. So far as it was practicable the teachers assumed the position of scholars, and the studies were so conducted as to illustrate the best method of teaching them in our common schools. The teachers actually *did* what it was recommended to have their scholars do. And at all times the teachers were encouraged to make inquiries and suggestions, and they were often called upon to show their method of teaching a particular study. Remarks were constantly made upon the art of teaching, the philosophy of a child's mind, and the manner of conducting studies in order to awaken, instruct and develop it. But to be more particular, I will remark—

1st. Upon *Reading*. This was made a prominent exercise in all the schools which I attended. We commenced by practicing upon the proper sounds of the vowels and consonants, as presented upon a large chart hung up in the room. Instead of telling that such a letter had such a sound, the sound was distinctly given by all the teachers. Then the organs of speech were brought into play by the clear and full *enunciation* of difficult words and sentences. For example, in the combinations of words containing *st*, *sts*, *th*, *dth*, &c. Much stress was laid upon this exercise in our schools, as the best means of securing a distinct enunciation—one beauty of good reading. The complaint was made that scholars did not read with a full, clear tone; that they chewed some of their words and mumbled more of them; and it was only by much exercise of the organs of speech that an inarticulate utterance could be remedied. The tongue, lips, teeth, &c., could be made to perform their office in reading and speaking, with the rapidity and perfection of the fingers upon the piano in the case of a skillful player. Particular attention should be paid to enunciation at the commencement of a child's reading; and, only in rare cases of organic defects, should he be allowed to proceed except as the words are properly articulated, and uttered with a full tone.

The next exercise in reading embraced pitch, stress, time, inflection of voice, &c. The teachers were drilled in exercises embracing all these qualities of good reading. Examples were selected from school books principally, and all read them, generally in concert. The general rule laid down was, that we must be governed by the *sense of the piece*, whether it should be read fast, very fast, slow, or very slow; loud or soft; the tone lively or grave; low or high, &c. In this connection it was shown that "minding stops and calling words right," as is often said, is *not* all that constitutes good reading; that often this was really no good quality, for the punctuation was a very imperfect guide, and sometimes positively false; that in reading some pieces, nothing but the sense could aid us. It was remarked also, that the reader must throw his soul into his voice and manner, so as to bring out the conception of the writer, or the reading, though accurate according to *rules*, would lack its great, *its one essential* excellence.

After going over a variety of examples to bring out these points, and to show different styles of reading, the teachers read pieces of their own selection for criticism. Of course from a hundred readers we should have every variety of piece, and every variety of manner. We spent from one to two hours a day in this way, much as we believe to our profit. It was a general conviction that teachers were more defective in reading, and in teaching reading in schools, than in most other departments of their labor. Instead of reading *so much* as is generally practiced in our schools—often through a large book—it was strongly urged that they should read less in quantity and pay more attention to the quality; often drill a whole class upon a single sentence, &c. The folly of having scholars read pieces above their comprehension—drawling through long paragraphs without catching the least inkling of the sense—was made to appear.

2d. *Grammar*. I placed grammar, as embracing orthography, syntax, punctuation, and the actual writing of our language, next in importance to reading. It properly embraces reading and every thing pertaining to a knowledge of language. But it has come to pass that this noble and useful study has practically, in nineteen-twentieths of our public schools, dwindled down to the mere *parsing of words*. I assert



it as a fact, that previous to the convention in Hartford, in November, 1846, there were no exercises in writing the English language connected with a course of grammatical instruction, in one school in twenty in this State; and I believe the same was true of the schools in most other States. All that scholars did in the study of grammar, was *to parse words*. Some systems of parsing made five, and others ten "parts of speech;" and whether more or less, the work of the grammar class seemed to be *to dovetail them together*. Hence, in most instances, grammar was a dry, wearisome, unintelligible study to the scholars. In many instances when the question was put to the class,—Why do you study grammar?" the answer was, "To learn to parse." And this was the answer usually given to parents, when they asked their children the use of studying grammar. Believing that the course usually taken to teach grammar was unphilosophical, if not positively absurd, I endeavored to teach a more rational method of proceeding. At the first exercise in this study, I raised the inquiry—What is grammar, and what the *object* of introducing it into our schools? After showing it was the science of language, and that its object in our schools was to make correct *writers* of our scholars, I attempted to illustrate a good method of proceeding. The definition of grammar in all the hundred books in use, is—"A science to teach the reading, speaking, and writing the English language correctly." But as reading and speaking are conducted as separate exercises in most schools, I confined myself to the best method of teaching children and youth the *correct writing* of the language; properly to express thoughts in their own words; that they might be competent to write letters or any piece of composition, according to good usage. It was recommended to put scholars at a very early age to writing sentences upon a slate or upon paper, as early as they could make the letters. To do this long before they were capable of understanding the *science* of language. Several ways by which this might be done were pointed out; e. g. when the class were ready with slate in hand, drop a book, break a stick, or make some motion—any thing to convey to their minds an idea. Let them all express the idea in their own words, and then the teacher correct the writing, if necessary, as to the use of capital letters, spelling, punctuation, &c. Or, have the class give on their paper or slates the uses of things; e. g. wood, iron, corn, cotton, wool, grass, flowers, animals, &c., &c. These were exercises for the youngest scholars who could make the writing letters. They will be pleased with the exercise, and it is one of the best to make them *think*, to make them *accurate in their expressions*, to teach them spelling, and it is the *practice* of writing which will give them the ability to write readily and properly. Teachers who have tried a practice of this kind, have pronounced it one of the most interesting and profitable of the school. After writing simple sentences of this kind for a few weeks or months, advance to a higher order of exercises. Let the time allotted be spent in writing the ideas which they have acquired from the lesson in geography; descriptions of objects; simple letters to each other; anecdotes which the teacher reads or relates to the class, &c., &c.; any topics within the sphere of their thoughts. Let the teacher take good care to bring the subjects within the comprehension of the class. Men cannot write upon what they do not understand; nor can children. To tell children to write a *composition* upon the topics usually selected for this purpose, is like telling men to give a treatise upon the geology of the moon. All the writing of the class, at each exercise, should be corrected; and it is well to have the scholars preserve these early efforts at composition: it will be a matter of interest to them in after years. From twenty to forty minutes each day should be spent in the writing exercise: no study is more useful.

Now when the scholars are twelve or fourteen years of age, and after this *practice* of expressing thoughts in their own language, I advise to take up the *science*. Let the class be supplied with some good grammar, and be made thoroughly to master the principles, and *to apply them to their own writing*. I insisted much upon this, because a scholar will not *retain* what he puts into his memory, unless he knows its application, and is required *actually to apply it*. Parse and analyze the writing of the class, as well as pieces from the book. Why keep scholars forever correcting the bad grammar of others, when they will write bad grammar enough themselves that need



correcting? Correct and parse their own and they will make rapid improvement; they will love the study of grammar, for it will have a *meaning* to their minds, and they will see its importance. What nonsense to attempt to teach an apprentice boot-making, clock-making, coat-making, or the making of any thing else, by confining him from six to twenty months to a book containing the *names* (parts of speech?) of the article to be manufactured, and never put the materials and tools into his hands and set him to *doing the thing that is to be done!* How long, by such a method alone, would it be before the apprentice would be competent to set up for himself? Why, if he ever expected to get rich by his trade, the life-time of Methuselah would be a mere baby-existence for the object. And how long, by the mere parsing of words by a book, will it take to make correct, fluent writers of the English language? I answer, as much longer than it would take to make clocks and coats by the like method, as the works of Milton and Macaulay are more difficult to produce than those of clock-makers and tailors. There must be the *practice* with the theory, or we can never acquire the ability to write with ease and propriety. And the *school* is the place for practice; and grammar the study in connection with which it should be secured. Grammar is a comparatively useless study, unless taught practically; and that it has not been so taught, everybody knows. Out of thirteen teachers examined one winter in a town of this State, seven could not write an English sentence correctly: they were never taught grammar beyond the mere A B C of the study, or *parsing*; it never before crept through their hair that it was designed to teach writing. I have known but one examining committee that ever tried teachers in writing, unless it was to write their names as a specimen of chirography. Now if arithmetic was taught as grammar has been, everybody would call such teaching folly, and say the time was worse than wasted. But if we demand practice—the actual working out of problems, in arithmetic, why not have the practice—the actual writing of the English language, in connection with the study of grammar? We shall have it. Many teachers are introducing it; and out of two thousand who have heard this subject presented, only two have expressed a dissenting voice. There is occasionally one who has made a particular mode of *matching words* a hobby so long that, to speak lightly of his “*disjunctive conjunction*,” or his “*conjunctive adverb*,” seems like profaning sacred things.\*

After the definitions and rules of the book are acquired, and the class have mastered the details of parsing, (and this can be done much sooner than is generally supposed,) the remaining exercises in a course of grammatical instruction should be the analyzation of the best pieces of prose and poetry. Not omitting, however, the writing of the class. And the object now should be to make the scholars *see and feel* the beauties of thought and diction contained in our best English authors. The piece for practice should be well read, the general subject or the sentiments of it understood, and then the attention of the class called to the significance of the words and figures used—parsing only so far as necessary to come at the structure of the sentences. These exercises, rightly conducted, will give the class a taste for good reading; they will cultivate their minds and hearts; and be of more real service to them through life than any other study of the school. And I highly approve of the custom of some teachers—taking for the older class the work of some standard author, and dwelling upon it for weeks, or even a whole term. A good author thus faithfully studied will be prized by that class, life through. Would that all our scholars, before leaving the school, were drilled in this way! Then would there be in our community more reading of valuable books, and less of the demoralizing trash which is thrown from the press. No study is so valuable to *cultivate mind* as grammar, when this study is philosophically pursued.

The question has sometimes arisen—“After all, does not parsing make writers?—Are not our citizens generally capable of writing the language?” We often say, there are so many adult persons in a State who cannot read or write. What do we mean?

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\* In one town which I visited I learned that a man had been teaching grammar by a *machine*. I was aware that teaching was quite mechanical, but did not know before that the machinery was actually invented. Upon inquiry I found that the machine taught *nothing but parsing*.



Why, that they cannot read a word or make a letter—under the necessity of representing their names by a cross. If we infer from this that all other adults of the State *can* write, what *must* we mean? Evidently no more than that they can make the writing letters, and thereby fashion their own names; for hundreds learn to write their own names, who cannot write any thing else. They do it rather than suffer the shame of making a cross. Shall this class be included among the *writers* of our language? And then there is much the larger class of adults who can write words and express thoughts in their own language; but who pretend to no accuracy of composition—not even the right use of capital letters, to correct spelling or punctuation.—Shall this class of persons, who compose nine-tenths of our communities, and most of whom “parsed grammar” in the district school, be denominated good writers? I maintain that the practice of writing in their school days would have made them *much better* writers, even if they had never parsed a word. Ask almost any man if his parsing in school (I mean where parsing was all of grammar which he acquired) did him any good, and he will unhesitatingly answer “No!” Then is it not a fact, that scholars in our higher schools, academies, seminaries, and even colleges, feel a repugnance to writing composition? Will they not—nine out ten of them—slight or dodge this exercise, if possible? Why is this? Because they did not practice writing in the primary schools, and acquire a love for it there.

I have dwelt upon the study of grammar, because to my mind it is one of the best studies for the improvement of the mind, one which, rightly pursued, will afford more pleasure and profit to the scholar through life than any other, and one to which the attention of teachers, and of our communities generally, needs to be directed.

3d. *Spelling.* To make correct spellers of our language is a work requiring much labor and much patience on the part of the teacher. And it is a work which must be accomplished at a very early period, or it will rarely be done at all. Children, from four to eight years of age, will learn to spell as rapidly as at any future period; and it was recommended that much pains be taken with them at this age. Let them spell the words from the very commencement of their reading. Spell the names of all the objects which they see, as well as the words from the book. As spelling is important principally for the purposes of writing, scholars, after they have learned to make letters, should *write* the words given out upon the slate. One plan of conducting this exercise in our schools, recommended at the conventions, was, to have all the scholars who could make the written characters, write the words of the lesson; then let them change slates and correct each other; after this the teacher either look over the spelling, or spell all the words, and the scholars correct their own mistakes. Each scholar would then spell all the words, and have his attention specially called to the spelling of others. Another plan was—let all the scholars bring to the teacher every morning one or more words upon a piece of paper, and the teacher put these out to the class. Occasionally spelling in concert, and also spelling by letter, or, as it is sometimes called, “the running-fire method,” was found profitable to awaken an interest, and secure better attention.

Spelling and defining were suggested as a valuable exercise. Teachers were urged to try every method to absorb scholars in the work of spelling. When the interest subsided under one system, adopt another. I deem the writing of the grammar class one of the most efficient means of securing good spelling. Grammar includes orthography, and, rightly taught, it will secure spelling. The sounds of letters and their power in particular words, came up in another connection; attention should be paid to these in connection with spelling words. Some inculcated the principle of having the scholars commit to memory a long list of rules for spelling, and reduce orthography to a more perfect system. Not having ever adopted this course, I could not speak of its utility. Yet I thought the few rules given in most of our school books should be *thoroughly* committed, together with the exceptions under them. They would be some aid to the learner. Yet the spelling of our language so defies rules, that we must mainly depend upon the *practice* of spelling to acquire the art. Many of our words are spelt differently by good writers, and by standard Lexicographers. There are about one thousand five hundred words of this class. In all such cases, it was said, teachers should



follow some one good authority. Practically, in the school, this difficulty is not as formidable as it might at first appear. A teacher would be justified in following the books which the committee recommend. It is hoped that literary men, whose opinion is authority in such matters, will sometimes give us uniformity both in spelling and in pronunciation.

A few persons defy all authorities, and spell the words according to the sounds which strike the ear in pronouncing them. But it was strongly urged upon teachers to follow the books in use. It was not *innovation*, but *improvement*, that we wanted. The subject of phonography came up at nearly all the conventions; and it was an interesting exercise to the teachers, but its introduction into our schools was not recommended.

4th. *Geography*. The first exercise in this study was a familiar lecture upon the globe. We had with us one of Mr. Corneli's new globes, which, while they are cheap, most happily illustrate the more interesting things which can be shown by those of a larger size. The change of seasons; the length of day and night at any time in all parts of the world; the comparative size of the different countries, and their distance and direction from each other; the meaning of all the circles upon the maps; these were shown, and several interesting problems solved. It is to be regretted that our schools generally are not furnished with globes. As one so good and so cheap is now in the market, I trust the deficiency will be met. If teachers have no globe, they were advised to manufacture something as a substitute; for scholars receive many erroneous impressions without this visible representation to aid them. After giving a general view of the earth, explaining the meaning of the circles and lines, zones, latitude and longitude, degrees in a circle, &c., by means of the globe and the map together, then came the question, what is the most efficient method of teaching the details of geography? Upon this question the experience of the teachers was called for; and, while several plans were suggested, there was an essential agreement in the main features of the following, to wit:

1. *Physical* geography should be taught by means of *Outline Maps*. Where the school is not and cannot be furnished with a complete set of large Outline Maps, e. g. Mitchell's, the teacher could make use of a black-board, and draw the outlines of the State or country which constituted the lesson. Upon each map there should be placed as many of the rivers, towns, mountains, roads, sectional and political divisions, &c., as it was desirable for the class to commit. By making use of the eye, in this way, the scholar learns the rivers by their direction, size and whole external appearance; the towns, by their situation and relative distance from each other, and so on. And at the recitation, the class should be required to sketch the outlines of the State or country, put down the mountains, towns, rivers, &c.; tell what States or countries border upon it; and give the information which they have acquired from the book. Then the teacher should add any other interesting facts which he may know.

Where Outline Maps could be had, it was recommended that children, at a very early age, should be instructed from them. It is a study happily adapted to interest and improve children; and in half the time they spend upon the abstract principles of punctuation, of which they understand absolutely nothing, they could acquire the whole of physical geography, as far as it is usually given, and retain it.

Begin at home. Take our own State, or town, or even a small part of the town, and give the class, if they are small scholars, a clear idea of distances, directions, what are called hills, and what mountains, what streams, and what rivers, and the like information, as fast as it seems necessary to keep their ideas clear and definite. The nearer home, the more detail is required. Of their own State, they should be able to tell all its rivers, all its counties, towns, large villages, railroads, productions, manufactures, &c. Be less minute when upon other States; yet more particular respecting all our States than foreign countries; teach more about England than about the countries of the Continent; and more of all the kingdoms of Europe than of Asia, and so on. The reasons for this are obvious. There is not time for learning every thing, and we should aim to secure the most knowledge of what it most concerns us to know.

2. *Civil and religious* geography. This expression will not bear criticism, but it is in common use. All our different geographies give more or less of the government,



religion, history, manners and customs of the people. And since there are so many different authors used in the same school, and since there is not time for so many recitations and do justice to any one, it was suggested, as one good plan, that all scholars in geography should be in one class, (unless the very youngest,) and the study pursued *topically*. For example, Connecticut, Mexico, Hindostan, or Greenland, is the topic; let each scholar commit what his book gives upon the subject, or what he can find from any book. A skillful teacher will, in this way, awaken more interest, and secure more reading and study in the class than if all had the same geography. (In all cases we recommend uniformity of books, but it seems almost hopeless to expect it.) A description of a recitation in one of our schools will convey my meaning. The teacher gave the signal for the class in geography to take the recitation bench. All had their slates, but no books or atlas. The teacher called upon No. 5 to draw the outlines of the country on the board, and all the rest drew it on their slates. *Burmah* was the lesson. After the general shape of the country was drawn, (occupying about two minutes only, for in acquiring the lesson the class had repeatedly drawn it on their slates,) the rivers were put down as the scholars gave their names; so with the towns and mountains. Then No. 5 told what she knew of *Burmah*: she said the population of the country was about eight million; (here No. 2 said it was three million, for the books differed;) the people were not as tall by several inches as the Europeans; color, a dull yellow, and the ladies sometimes painted to make it brighter; houses built of bamboo and thatched; the structure of the houses indicates the rank of the owner; they have many splendid temples and costly pagodas, &c. No. 8, whose raised hand was indicative of still farther information, said, the people lived upon rice, all who could get it; melons and various kinds of vegetables were eaten with the rice; sweet oil made of cocoanut, took the place of butter; they raise sweet potatoes, onions, peas, beans, &c. The people eat every thing—lizards, snakes, roots, worms. The more religious portion will not kill animals, but will eat them if they find them dead. They eat with their fingers, washing their hands before and after each meal; they cram the mouth full, and chew their victuals a long time; they eat twice a day, and more at a meal than we do; they do not drink at the time of eating, that they may eat the more. No. 1 then told what he knew farther upon the subject. Most of the people use cotton cloth for a garment, without much dress-making; some have this covering made of silk, and wear it quite gracefully. They wear sandals on their feet, made of wood or hide, and on entering a house they leave these at the door. The ladies smoke cigars. All the people are fond of ornaments, and hang to their ears round pieces of gold, silver, stone, paper, &c. Here the hand of No. 7 was raised; she said the people took a great deal of pains with their hair. No. 2 spake out and said they give real nice kisses in *Burmah*; instead of saying, “give me a kiss,” they say, “give me a *smell*,” for they kiss with the nose as well as mouth. Another said, they black their teeth and tattoo themselves. Another, they are a temperate people; and they are not as greedy for money as New England people.

After the class had exhausted their stock of knowledge, derived from various sources, the teacher asked some questions, and gave them still more information. I give this as a mere sketch of a recitation which illustrates the method of studying geography spoken of at the conventions. By taking up the study *topically*, and dwelling upon a country till the class get definite ideas, and thorough knowledge, as far as they attempt to do any thing, I believe the study of geography may be made one of great interest and profit. *Such* knowledge will not be forgotten. The outline maps familiarize the eye and the mind with the extent and shape of the country, and drawing it fixes it indelibly in the memory. Then the familiar manner of reciting, instead of having the scholar repeat the answer in the book in a stereotype form, *verbatim et literatim*, secures more mental activity, and cultivates the colloquial powers. This answering all questions in the precise words of the book, cannot be too severely condemned; it cramps all mind, checks thought, and hermetically seals the mouth of the scholar, the instant the memory gets off the track. Certain rules and forms and definitions should be committed to memory; but, in a study like geography or history,



the scholar should be taught to get the ideas, rather than the precise words of the book.

It is believed that by some such plan of study as has been given, the scholars in our schools will obtain, in less time than is usually expended, a pretty thorough knowledge of all the different countries of the globe. A knowledge that will stand by them, and be of service when they read papers and books of travel and history, or hear lectures at monthly concerts and lyceums, and in their family and social intercourse, life through. The study thus intelligibly pursued, will open new fields of thought and make them wiser and happier. If it is said, "it cannot be carried out in our district schools." I answer, it *can*! It is in more than twenty which I could name. Let us give our teachers globes, outline maps, large black-boards, a few books of reference, or wages enough to lead them to purchase for themselves; and above all, a *seminary* where they can receive a *special training* in the art of teaching, and they will be able to do ten times more for our children than is now done. The very A B C of the philosophy of teaching and training and cultivating the scholars of our schools, is yet to be acquired by the great mass of our people.

5th. *Arithmetic*. Others were willing to conduct the exercises in this study at the conventions, and I did little more than throw in occasional remarks. At Middletown, Messrs. Allen and Root gave several exercises in the different rules. At Tolland and New London, Mr. Allen, assisted occasionally by others, took this department. At Goshen, Mr. Rockwell and several of the teachers went extensively into the subject. At Norwich, Mr. Hiscock taught it. At Farmington, Messrs. Allen and Gallup took written arithmetic, and Mr. Cook mental. Generally, teachers were more familiar with this than with other studies, and had happy methods of illustration. Teachers love to teach arithmetic, from the fact that they have turned their attention more to it than to any other exercise of the school. This remark will apply to very many of them. It is often the case that a teacher will have interesting recitations in arithmetic, when almost every other exercise is hastily and superficially gone over. Yet it is still too commonly the practice of doing little more in this study than hearing the class repeat the rules, and showing scholars how to work out, or rather how to "*get the answer to the sums*." At the conventions, it was recommended by all who spoke upon the subject, thoroughly to drill a class upon each successive rule till they could not only arrive at the answer to the problem, but till they clearly understand every principle, and the reason for every step in the process. A most familiar acquaintance with the elementary principles and fundamental rules of numeration, addition, subtraction, division and multiplication, was desirable, before proceeding to the other rules of the science. Examples of simple and intelligible methods of teaching these rules were given. There were exercises also in reduction, federal money, interest, vulgar and decimal fractions, the square and cube root. Several of the teachers had something to say upon teaching these and other parts of arithmetic.

The importance of this study, *as a mental discipline*, was much insisted on; and for this purpose the teacher, after going over a rule in a way best adapted to make the class understand it, should give several ways of arriving at the same result, and encourage the pupils to invent methods of their own. It was thought, if teachers would "*make haste slowly*" in this study, and advance no faster than the class could become *familiarized with principles*, there would be no necessity of scholars being so long upon the study of common arithmetic. Rarely do we find a scholar in the district school *done* with arithmetic; term after term, year after year, he "*goes over it*," beginning each term where he began the term preceding.

It is no uncommon thing for scholars at sixteen in winter schools, to be found *going over* and *saying* to the teacher, precisely the same thing in principle, that they "*went over*" and said at six. Not that they know no more, but *thoroughness* is secured to so little extent, that each successive teacher (and the *succession* is rapid) thinks it best to "*begin at the beginning*." In some schools this is not the case. Scholars go through a system of rigid mathematical training from the simplest mental operations to the higher principles of written arithmetic, and onward through Algebra. And every one who will reflect upon the subject, will be convinced that such a course can and



should be pursued in all our schools. It would take no more time than is now spent in forever "going over" the book. One example will illustrate more fully my meaning. Out of twelve schools examined in a town one winter, the committee found eight classes who had studied interest from four to seven terms; that is, they had been *through* this rule, and obtained the answers to the questions as many times. The committee tried the experiment with each class to see how many *understood* "pointing off." They selected this rule by which to test their *thoroughness*, because scholars, provident of their future monetary operations, aim to understand interest. The result was, *not one in five* could, with any confidence that they were right, place the points. Not a third of them knew the nature of the multiplier. Not half of them could cast the interest upon notes where payments were made. And that committee did not put difficult and puzzling questions, nor were the scholars at all diffident or embarrassed. Now how much better, how much more rapid the advancement, how much more pleasure in the study, had the first teacher who had the drilling of the class, *continued* to drill them when they first studied the rule, till they *knew* it?

Mental arithmetic, in the opinion of all the teachers who had taught it, should be a prominent study with the younger portion of the school. Several bore testimony that they were more indebted to the thorough drilling which they had in Colburn's First Lessons, for their first clear ideas of the science of arithmetic, than to any other book. No study is better adapted to interest and discipline the minds of young scholars, than a work of this kind. And when they have been drilled in all the sections of such a book, they will not be satisfied without clear conceptions of *principles*, when they take up written arithmetic. At Farmington, an interesting discussion took place as to what *formula* was the best for scholars to use in going through the mental operations in some of the more difficult sections. But all agreed that some intelligible formula should be adopted, and the pupil, *without the teacher's assistance*, should be taught to go through it. If the teacher is constantly helping the scholar by asking some leading question, the value of the study is lost. Explanation is to be given, but before the question is left the scholar should be able, without the least hesitation, to go through the operation. If, for example, the question be this:— $\frac{4}{7}$  of 28 are how many thirds of 21? the teacher should not keep asking questions like these—Well, what is  $\frac{1}{7}$  of 28? (scholar answers, 4.) Well, if 4 is  $\frac{1}{7}$ , what is  $\frac{4}{7}$ ? (scholar, 16.) Well, 16 is how many thirds of 21? What is one-third of 21? (scholar, 7.) Well, how many times is 7 contained in 16? and so on. The teacher may do this in his explanations; but before he leaves the class he should see to it that they can go through with it without such aid. Scholars will love to *go alone* in this study just as soon as they are strong enough; and the *go-cart* of a teacher's leading questions constantly shoved under them, tends to debilitate, and to destroy the pleasure of their own exertions. And this remark should be remembered in conducting all the exercises of the school. Aid, explain, encourage, at the right time and to a proper degree, but leave upon the mind of the scholar the consciousness of *self-reliance*. Never leave him behind, nor always be letting him see through your spectacles; keep his own mental vision clear and strong by *having him keep it in constant exercise*.

6th. *Penmanship*. The practice of writing *copy-hand*, as it is called, is universal in our schools. The object—to make ready and legible writers of all the scholars—is a good one, and must be secured. The question was raised at the convention—Does copying so much after so many different writers, secure the object? Or is it the best way to secure it? The teachers of our schools are changed so often, that the scholars, on an average, before leaving school, copy after a dozen different writers—supposing that the teachers write the copies. Now one object of copy-writing is to secure the correct form of letters and their combinations. Hence, it was argued, there should be uniformity in the copy. The child, this season, should not spend an hour a day in imitating letters made differently from those which he spent an hour a day in imitating last season. One teacher writes very fine; another very coarse; one makes the letters perpendicularly; another slants them at an angle of  $45^\circ$ ; one writes a round hand, another a sharp hand; and the question is seriously proposed, whether the scholar, on leaving the school, *has any hand at all!* Some, who acquire the ability



of imitating well, let the copy be as it may, leave school good copyists, and their writing books look neat. They are pronounced good writers. But when they come to write their *own running hand*, do they *continue* good writers? Not always!

Would not a better course be, for committees to recommend some one system of writing, Winchester's, for example, in writing books with printed copies, for their schools? Such books can be purchased, in quantities for schools, cheaper than those made by the parents and scholars. Then there would be uniformity, and copy-writing would have an object, and the object would be attained. Much less time would be consumed in the mere mechanical labor of copying, and also more perfection in the art. Teachers should teach children to make the writing letters on their slates; for they should practice writing words and sentences long before it is advisable for them to have pen and ink, and copy in a book. In this way they are getting the command of the muscles, and becoming better prepared for the copying. Two or three terms at most, is enough for the practice of imitating another's style of making letters. It is time worse than wasted to begin copying at eight or nine years of age, and continuing the practice till sixteen. School-life is too precious to be thrown away upon this mechanical labor, when all the advantages of it may be secured in a short time. I speak plainly upon this, as upon all exercises of the school, for I wish to call the attention of the community, and of teachers especially, to the subject. If I am wrong, it can be shown; if I am right—why, the ninety thousand children and youth of Connecticut—the generation constantly in our schools—to-day, boys and girls; to-morrow, the men and women of the State—ought to have the advantage and the blessings of the right, in their system of training!

7th. *Drawing*. This exercise is rarely introduced into our district schools; since so few teachers attend to it themselves, it is hopeless, for the present, to attempt its introduction; hence little was said about it at the conventions. In the order of nature, drawing comes before writing, and is directly calculated to aid the scholar in that art. It gives discipline to the same muscles which are used in writing, cultivates the eye and the observation of the pupil. Children love to draw characters and objects, as witnessed in their plays in the sand, or the use they will make of a pencil and paper. This early development should be watched by the parent and teacher, and receive encouragement and direction. Drawing affords a good and a useful discipline, and the attention of teachers was directed to the subject. By a very little effort on their part, scholars may be able to sketch, with a good degree of accuracy, the outlines of objects, and the exercise will afford them much pleasure. Practically it will be of use to them often in after-life.

As an exercise for small children—one that will furnish them with a useful employment at an age when they are unable to do much at studying lessons—some simple drawing lessons, such as those in Holbrook's little drawing books, was recommended. Small scholars ought not to sit still and do nothing four hours a day in the school room, as is the almost universal practice. There are exercises adapted to their capacities, and well calculated to advance their education, and why not make use of them? To sit, as half of them do, upon backless planks, with no resting-place for the soles of their feet, or support for the body, is suffering enough any way; and why add to their suffering by making them thus sit, *and have nothing to do*? It was deemed a piece of sheer cruelty, and denounced as barbarous, to confine the convicts of our prisons in cells, and afford them no occupation; and humanity (aided doubtless by the instinct of gain) came to their relief, and gave them work. And it is hoped, since we have attended to our scoundrels, we shall begin to see to our children. By giving small scholars slates for making letters, figures, and the various pleasing objects of this little drawing book, we shall relieve their weariness, cultivate their minds, teach them many useful lessons, and, what is exceedingly desirable to be done, we shall make the school attractive.

8th. *Singing*. Remarks were made at all the conventions upon the importance of singing in our schools. At Farmington, Mr. Ward, who has taught juvenile singing schools, gave it as his experience that all children could learn to sing; and showed how it might be introduced into the common schools. Several ways were suggested. One



method was, to have a teacher of the science go from school to school in the same town, and spend a short time once in a day, or in two days, to instruct scholars, and exercise them in singing. Or if the teacher could sing, he could introduce it without any difficulty, or without the least interruption to the other studies of the school. It was maintained that the practice of singing would tend to secure more progress in all study. Strike up a tune when the school gets a little dull, and it breathes new life and animation into the scholars; and this increased wakefulness more than compensates for the time spent in the singing. And singing of itself is in a high degree improving; it cultivates the voice and ear and intellect and heart. Its moral influence is invaluable. It may be made one of the happiest means of governing a school. Scholars love to sing, and it is to be regretted that it is so rarely practiced in our schools. Of late, however, teachers are giving more attention to the subject; and the time is coming when the question will be put to teachers at their examinations, "can you sing?" We do not advise this at present, but trust that teachers will prepare themselves to instruct in this useful and pleasing exercise. It does not require any extensive knowledge of the science of music, to lead children in the simple songs of the school room. And without teaching the science at all, there may be the practice of singing.

In Italy, Prussia, Germany, and some other countries of Europe, it is a rare thing to find persons who cannot sing; and the reason is, that all the children of those countries are taught vocal music in the family or in the school. Singing, as well as reading, or any other study, is a regular exercise in their system of instruction. And there is no good reason why our people should not be as musical as any other. The workshops, the kitchens and parlors, the hills and valleys of New England would be as vocal with the cheerful song as those of Switzerland or Prussia, if our nurseries and school houses were made more musical. It is a comparatively modern discovery with us, that every child has a *voice*, an *ear* and a *taste* for music, as truly as for any thing else; and if early cultivated, every one would love to sing. This now being an admitted fact, we trust it will prove a starting point from which we shall make rapid progress.

9th. *Punctuation*. I now refer to punctuation as applied to the writing of the scholars. Few persons ever attempt any thing like correct punctuation when they write. Printers tell us that they have to punctuate (often to *spell*) many of the articles sent them for publication. I was not aware that such deficiency in this branch existed among teachers, till I came to examine them. At the conventions there were generally two exercises in punctuation. An anecdote was told, and the teachers wrote it upon their paper or slates. They were to write, punctuate, spell, use capital letters, &c., just as they thought was right. Half an hour was given them for this, and then their writing was examined. A few were correct in all points; but most of them, as was manifest, had not *practically* attended to the subject. Writing has been so neglected in all our schools, that little beyond a few abstract rules is acquired. One man remarked that, when a small scholar in the district school, he was kept committing and repeating the pages upon punctuation in the spelling book as many as eight seasons; and after that, as many more upon parsing words; and when, at sixteen, he was sent to the academy, he had never been taught or told, nor had he dreamed, that either punctuation or parsing had any thing to do with *his own writing* of the English language. Several teachers bore a similar testimony respecting their early education. Hence it is no wonder that teachers are deficient here, for no pains was taken with them. I wish to state *facts*, and not to find fault with teachers; they do as well as can be expected, all things considered. All my sympathies are with them; and I am satisfied that they have, as a body, the right spirit, and desire to qualify themselves more thoroughly for their responsible work. If the State will do as much, yes, half as much, to encourage teachers to secure high qualifications, as is done to encourage professional men, all will be well. But more of this in its proper place; I allude to it now, for I fear I shall be thought given to fault-finding. I do not fear this from teachers themselves, for they have expressed the warmest gratitude for the hints which have been kindly given. I am reporting what was said and done at the conventions, and no more—not half so much.



Now I maintain that punctuation, for the purposes of *reading*, can be verbally taught by the teacher as the class read, better than any other way; and instead of keeping children upon such unintelligible lessons, it is more profitable and pleasant to drill them upon outline maps, mental arithmetic, drawing, &c. When scholars can write sentences in their own words, then teach punctuation; and it is not much labor to secure accuracy in the practice. One method of teaching suggested was, to read a paragraph for scholars to write, and then let them punctuate it according to the *sense*. But correcting their own writing is better; applying the principles as they are capable of understanding them. The punctuation should never be omitted in writing; it is essential to the sense—it is, properly speaking, *language*, as really so as words. Several examples were given to illustrate this. One was the case of a will, left by a man, in which the placing of a comma decided to whom a sum of money was left. Another was the following: “John C. Calhoun says John Q. Adams is one of the greatest statesmen.” Who says this? The placing of the comma must decide. Placed before “says,” and Adams is the one; placed after “says,” and Calhoun is the one. Another was a note sent to a minister to be read from the pulpit. It was punctuated and read thus: “John Mason, having gone to sea his wife, desires prayers.” The spelling of “sea,” of course, would not be observed by the congregation, and it is not strange that they should wonder why special prayer should be requested in such a case. The comma placed after “sea,” changes the meaning somewhat. An anecdote was told of a man who wrote a book for publication, and, not knowing how to punctuate the manuscript, he filled several sheets of paper with commas, semicolons, periods, dashes, exclamation points, &c., and told the printer to put them into the last part of the volume, and let the reader help himself. Now, by taking a little pains, one twentieth of the time usually spent in *committing* punctuation—in the *practice* of punctuation, and all scholars will be accurate; or sufficiently so, for in the use of some points good writers differ. One minister said, he never used any thing but a *dash* in writing; when he was through with a thought, he dashed it, and let it go.

10th. *Black-board exercises for small scholars.* The continual use of the black-board was recommended in the instruction of all the class of the school. There should be two good boards in every school—one for the teacher and the other for the class. One large one will answer; though several exercises for small children should be left on the board, and two is much better than one. These are so cheap and so easily made, that there is no good excuse for not having them. All I wish, under this head, is to report some exercises which were given for small scholars. One object is to keep this portion of the school orderly, while the teacher is hearing the older classes; and a higher object is to give them *something profitable to do*. Without spending much time, a teacher can keep them occupied in ways that will interest them. Let them be provided with small slates, which will cost a few cents only, and the teacher give them upon the board for exercises letters both printed and written, figures of all kinds, the simplest exercises in all the fundamental rules of arithmetic, drawing lessons, &c., &c. Every teacher would do well to provide himself with Dr. Allcott’s little work called “Black-board Exercises.” It costs but twelve and a half cents. It is full of valuable suggestions.\*

11th. *Physiology.* At Farmington the teachers had an opportunity of hearing several lectures upon physiology and the laws of health, from Dr. Lambert. The most that was done at the conventions generally, was to call the attention of teachers to some plain physical laws necessary to be regarded for the success of the school and the health of the scholars. They should see that the room is frequently ventilated, that the scholars may breathe a wholesome atmosphere, and have their minds vigorous. Provision is made, in many of our new school houses, for a change of air; but most

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\* We did not recommend, at the conventions, any text-books for schools, nor allow any person to do so. But we did occasionally suggest a book which would be of value to the teacher. The question of books is left with town committees, and we in no way interfered. Such were our instructions, and it was important to adhere to them.



of the old ones need an opening in the ceiling, or the windows so fixed that they can be let down. Fresh air is quite a desideratum for the utmost efficiency of the school. It is no uncommon thing to find from fifty to seventy scholars crowded into a space of twenty feet square, kept there six hours a day, and more than half this time, in the winter season, breathing an atmosphere positively injurious; fatal to mental activity, and deadly to the body, only as the muscular activity of children will throw off disease. The headache and pale, languid countenances of many children, find their cause in the confined and deleterious air of the school room. This State, in the construction of her prison, and of her elegant and commodious buildings for the insane, the deaf and dumb, took good care that there should be a wholesome air for the inmates. Would that parents were as wise, or as *benevolent*, in the construction of school houses for their children! Since the old fashioned large fire-places have been closed, and stoves introduced, *wood* has indeed been saved, but *heads* have been lost. Mr. Horace Mann has somewhere a remark of this kind: "To put children on a short allowance of fresh air, is as foolish as it would have been for Noah, during the deluge, to put his family on a short allowance of water. Since God has poured out an atmosphere fifty miles deep, it is enough to make a miser weep to see our children stinted in breath."

Teachers should do what they can to secure comfortable and convenient seats for their scholars. Small children should have backs to their seats, and all scholars should have a resting place for their feet. In one town the committee measured the height of the school benches, and in most of the school houses the seats for the children were from two to six inches higher than the chairs in which their fathers sat at home. In one school, the feet of no scholar came within four inches of the floor. Dangling in that style scholars will be restless; and it would be a saving of timber, to say the least, "to fell the sticks." A teacher should regulate the warmth of the room by a thermometer; for, being confined so closely, his own feelings are no safe criterion. He should have regard to the health of the scholars at recess and intermission; if the ground is very wet, or the weather rainy, he will need to caution them against sitting with wet feet or clothes. Ideas of this kind were thrown out, for they bear directly upon the prosperity of the school.

The science of physiology is studied in but few schools; yet I see no reason why it should not generally be introduced. It would prove interesting to scholars, and surely it is as wise to acquaint them with their own physical structure as with the nature of a disjunctive conjunction, the rule of three, or the geography of Ethiopia. It is as useful to know the direction the blood takes in the veins and arteries, as to know the direction of the Niger. And since all people have commercial intercourse with their stomachs three times a day, it would seem as important to know its situation and ability, as to possess like knowledge in respect to a foreign port, to which only one in ten thousand sends a ship three times a year. The length and structure of the internal canal, one would suppose, should be learned, no less than the same facts about the Erie or Farmington. And most persons are more sensibly affected by what are contraband articles at the straits of the piloric orifice, than at the straits of Gibraltar.

12th. *Pronunciation.* The special attention of teachers was called to this subject, for two reasons:—one was the importance of securing *uniformity* throughout our country, in the pronunciation of words; and the other was the fact, that scholars are very likely to follow through life their early practice in this particular. In no exercise did we meet with more difficulty than in this; some followed Walker, others Worcester, and more Webster, and more still *themselves*, or their early *teachers*, in pronouncing. Very little pains is taken in most schools to secure accuracy even in respect to words upon which all authorities agree. One great defect lies in a want of a full and distinct *enunciation*. This was pointed out in the first exercise in reading, and the only remedy suggested. Scholars who only about half speak their words, and when they come to the longer and more difficult ones, mumble them so that the teacher cannot tell the sounds given, really do not pronounce at all. And it is feared there is too much of this kind of reading. Some of the more recent reading books give directions for pronouncing the words in the pieces for practice, but this is inadequate to mee



the necessity of the case. We need in our schools a dictionary approved by men competent to decide such a question. It is comparatively of little consequence whose arithmetics are used in a school; for the science of mathematics is the same in all. It becomes a question of arrangement only. Not so with the authority used for spelling and pronouncing our language. This will affect our writing and speaking for life.

It was recommended to teachers to have in their schools some approved dictionary, and to consult it in every doubtful case. Also, to carry with them a pocket memorandum, in which to write all words which they heard pronounced differently from what they are accustomed to pronounce them; and then to settle the correct method when they had an opportunity to consult their authorities. It was suggested, as a still farther means of perfecting themselves in pronunciation, to read over some standard dictionary, and mark every word, the pronunciation of which was new to them. At the conventions, from one to two hundred words were pronounced incorrectly, (such as are most commonly so pronounced,) and then the class would give the correct method.

13th. *The arrangement and classification of schools.* Teachers would often inquire—"What can we do with fifty or sixty, or even seventy scholars, of all ages, from four to sixteen? There are so many classes to read, spell, recite, &c., that we have no time to spend in *drilling* them in all the studies." This evil was granted to exist, and it was deemed a very serious one. The average number of exercises in our district schools, is about twenty-five: the reading and spelling of all the classes, the lessons in all the various studies, the writing, the general exercises for the small scholars, bring it to this number. Making the necessary deduction for tardiness, recess and interruptions of various kinds, and the time for the real work of teaching is less than five hours a day; and in many schools, during the coldest weather in winter, on account of an uncomfortable house and green wood seasoned in a snow bank, at least one hour more must be deducted. But calling the time five hours, and the exercises twenty-five, and the time for each is *twelve minutes*. And what can a teacher do at *teaching* in so short a time? Can he drill a class in reading, arithmetic, grammar, or any other study? What shall be done? We answer unhesitatingly, Make *fewer classes*. If the district will not divide the school, putting the younger portion under a female teacher, or an assistant, then so classify the school, and so arrange the recitations, as to secure the time necessary for *teaching*. Merely to rush through so many exercises, and barely hear the scholars read a few lines, or "say" their lessons, is *school-keeping*, but not school-teaching, and this distinction is a broad one.

The plan selected was to put all the scholars who studied geography, grammar and arithmetic, into two classes, and if the difference in age and attainment be not too great, into one. Instead of hearing two or three say their lesson in one geography, and two or three in another, give out (as was said under the head of geography) the subject by *topics*. All who are old enough to *parse*, should be put into one class; and the writing exercises that were recommended in connection with grammar, can be conducted by making two divisions, and in some schools one. Two classes in common arithmetic are enough. The few scholars in a school, who would be able to progress much faster than such an arrangement admits of, might devote more attention to some other study. And if, after all that can be done by classification, the teacher still has not time enough to drill each class every day, call the class forward for recitation only once in two days. Better take time *thoroughly to teach*, than to simply *hear the class say lessons*, if they do not recite so often. The same principle holds good in conducting reading exercises. It is better to make thorough work of the reading, when any thing is attempted, if the attempt is made less frequently, than to hurry a class through two or three readings a day. Some teachers are so pressed for time to *go over* all the lessons, that they set a class to reading, and after they are under way—the head scholar taking the lead—they go at something else—mending pens or assisting scholars in other studies; and sometimes they keep several classes going at once—tending them as a girl tends several looms in a cotton factory; when there is a stoppage, see to it and again start the *machinery*. We say, Stop all that! Cast-iron schoolmasters can be made that will answer *that* purpose, and save both nerves and



money. *Teach, Teach!* since *mind*, and not cotton or wool, is the material given upon which to work.

Here the teachers would remark, that parents would not be satisfied if their children did not read three or four times a day, and recite, at least, once. The answer was,—kindly explain the reasons of your course, and show that no less *time* was spent in reading; and as soon as parents saw that it was not *indolence*, but a determination to make their children better readers, that led to the change, they will be satisfied. And if there was a little complaint, no matter; it will only call the attention of the district to the subject, and the result will be good. Would that there was something—a difficulty is better than nothing—to call parents to the school! Teachers would do good service to the district, and it would be creditable to themselves, to call all the parents together some evening, and explain to them the course he wished to pursue and give the reasons. Two or three teachers that we know of, took this course last winter, and the result was most happy; they had parental coöperation, and so pleased was the district that they were hired by the year. A teacher should have some *system* in teaching, and carry it out as far as possible. And when a district sees that their teacher *knows* his own business and *how to do it*, they will be satisfied. If not, why then let them teach their own schools? No teacher should suffer himself to become a mere automaton, or some mechanical power for *turning off* the greatest possible number of lessons.

Experience has taught us that the thorough drilling of a class, in reading, for example, once a day, or once in two days, is far preferable to the usual plan of “reading round” hastily every day. We know of one instance where the committee directed the teacher not to call out the classes unless they had at least an half hour to spend in giving instruction. Any skillful teacher will say that, for the older classes, half an hour is a short allowance of time for drilling. Some exercises for the younger scholars may occupy less time, and they may read more frequently, for they have fewer studies. Give all an equal share of attention, and let there be a well-arranged plan of proceedings for the day. Something like the following

PROGRAM.

Time.—A. M.	Exercises in reading, recitations, &c.
9 to 9.20	Whole school, reading Testament, singing, prayer, &c.
9.20 “ 9.50	Reading of the first class—every day, if time.
9.50 “ 10.30	Reading of other classes.
10.30 “ 10.40	Recess.
10.40 “ 11	Lessons, or exercises for small scholars.
11 “ 11.30	Outline maps and geography.
11.30 “ 12	Grammar and writing exercises.
P. M.	
1 to 1.30	Reading and spelling of small classes.
1.30 “ 2	Mental arithmetic.
2 “ 2.30	Second class in written arithmetic.
2.30 “ 2.40	Recess.
2.40 “ 3	First class in arithmetic.
3 “ 3.20	History.
3.20 “ 3.40	Philosophy, &c.
3.40 “ 4	General spelling exercise, singing, &c.

Of course the program would vary in different schools. In some districts the classification can be much more perfect than in others. While one class is reading or reciting, the other classes are studying, and the small scholars have some exercises on their slates, as has been suggested in another place. A study card and a clock or watch should be hung up in the school. We do not say that teachers should never



vary from some such plan which they may adopt for themselves. Occasionally a class gets so absorbed in a recitation, e. g. in a rule of arithmetic, that the clock should not check them. Keep them at work till the interest somewhat subsides, if they have no recitation the next day. For when the mind gets fairly roused, it is improving more in a few minutes than it is at other times in as many hours. Such instances will occur almost every week; and if they occur every day, so much the better. However, no two teachers who are equally good, will manage all such things in the same way.

In this connection, the importance of having the house warmed in season to commence precisely at the hour of school, and of having the scholars *punctual*, was shown. Parents in some districts are verily guilty in these matters. A teacher can have no plan, or classification, or system of any kind, when the temperature of the room at nine o'clock is zero, and the wood for the fire, full sled-length, well housed in the ditch or snow. More than one-third of the school hours are lost, during the coldest of the weather, for the want of a comfortable room, and punctuality on the part of the scholars. In one school, during a cold month, in the winter of 1843, all that was done by the teacher and older boys, *for eight school days in succession*, was to dig wood out of the snow, bake it on the stove and burn it. The school-house was burnt before the school was through, and now that district has one of the best houses in the State. Would that many parents had studied arithmetic eight or ten years longer in the district school—particularly spent a few years more on the “Rule of Three,” and then they would be able to tell, “by cyphering,” the answer to the following question:—If, with *open work* for a school-house and green wood to warm it, it takes eight days to learn *nothing*, how long, with a tight house and dry wood, would it take to learn *something*?

14th. *Teaching the alphabet.* Teach *words* in connection with *letters*. For example:—call the attention of the child to B-O-Y in the book, and on the board or slate. Ask these letters over in every order, and after the child knows the name by the form, then pronounce the word. Three letters and the word are enough for the first lesson. Leave them on the board or slate, and often call attention to them. Next time, take M-A-N, and proceed in the same way; and so on through the alphabet. And, instead of three or four months spent upon the letters, the child will read simple words in a week. This attempt to cram twenty-six letters into a child's mind, at its first intellectual meal, is a great blunder in the first step of its education. The child retains no distinct impression of any of them; probably its *eye* does not see half of them as the scissors or knife blade is drawn along. Why ask the child more than you *expect* it will remember? The letters are to be learnt, and hence common sense teaches to have this done as we proceed. Unite words with letters, because it will be easier to teach the letters in this way, and then the child is gaining so much in reading. Some recommend teaching words and reading, before letters. There is no advantage in this method, that we can perceive.

Omit the “*abs*,” by themselves, they carry no meaning to a child's mind, and, by themselves, they give a false sound to the letters. Keep the child reading simple words and sentences, and in one term it will master the first difficulties in the art. The idea that a child can more easily sound words of two letters than of three, is not correct; certainly not in most cases, nor in any case that would occur in any proper book for children to commence with. If teachers do not believe this, we only say, *Try the experiment.*

15th. *Studies adapted to scholars of all ages, from four to sixteen.* For the first year or two, reading and spelling, counting, making figures and letters, or drawing objects on the slate, and other simple exercises of the kind. Then, together with these, when the scholars are from six to eight, make use of such exercises as address the *eye* to a great extent: e. g. those on the numerical frame; (teachers can make such a frame, if a good one is not provided;) such as adding, subtracting, dividing, multiplying,—taking good care that the pupil *mentally* sees the operation. At this age, also, the lesson in the spelling book, except the rules of punctuation, may be taught. And nearly all of *physical* geography represented upon such maps as “Mitchell's Outline Maps.” At a very early age, scholars are *competent* for such a study—they will



like it, and they will be *educated* by it. Begin, also, mental arithmetic; children at seven or eight can study, with great profit, such a work as Colburn's First Lessons. The writing of simple sentences, and of lessons for spelling. Thus thoroughly trained in *studies adapted to their capacities*, till eight years of age, they will then be capable to commence with the other parts of geography, with written arithmetic, the writing part of grammar, including punctuation, the use of capitals, &c. At fourteen, they should be able to take up the *science* of grammar, the analyzation of different sentences, and to apply the science to their own writing. Geography and common written arithmetic being completed, scholars should advance to philosophy, the higher principles of mathematics, algebra, geometry, surveying, &c. All this, and more, is done in many schools that might be named, and it can and should be done in all. At present we do not expect so much in the great majority of our schools. But when parents begin to look into the philosophy of teaching, and to *know how much may be done*, they will not be satisfied to have their children acquire only a little smattering of "reading, writing (copy-hand) and ciphering," while the children in other places are *thoroughly trained* in a systematic course of study.\*

Occasionally a parent complains of the number of studies already introduced into the school. Says that when he was a boy there was no geography or grammar studied; the scholars then "read" four times a day and committed the spelling book and the rules of arithmetic; and he thinks this is enough now. But this same man, if he can once be made to see that all which was done in his day is better done now, leaving abundant time for more and valuable studies, will not find fault. There is progress in every thing else, and why not have progress in education? Farmers have improved methods of cultivating the soil; mechanics are constantly making improvements in their department of labor; all professional men aim at progress. And is the district school the only thing, in our republican and civilized State, that shall be doomed to a stationary position? We have a quicker churn for our butter, a quicker spindle for our thread, an easier chair to sit in, an easier seat to ride on, and a vastly swifter horse to draw us; and shall we have no better methods, and no more conveniences for the intellectual cultivation of our children? A few will complain; this has always been the case. It is the destiny of some men to grumble. What then? When was the world known to stand still because a few persons wanted to have "all things continue as they were?" Had it, where should we and *they* have been? Let it be demonstrated (and it can and will be demonstrated) that more, vastly more, can be accomplished in our schools, and the great majority will demand it. When the agriculturist has discovered a better way of raising cabbages or calves, the papers make it known through the land. It may be the time will come when parents and teachers will be as anxious to know if any thing valuable has been discovered in the intellectual and moral training of children and youth.

I have thus given, as briefly as I deemed advisable, an account of our proceedings during the *days* of the conventions. I have said enough to show that we could not have been idle during those days, and that we were occupied upon no unprofitable subjects. To us the conventions have been most pleasant, and we have reason to believe that they have been interesting and valuable to the hundreds of teachers who have attended them. The teachers have expressed the warmest thanks for the hints and instruction which have been given, and it is doubtful whether the State ever passed an act that met, from all parties, with more universal approval. The influence of these conventions will be felt to some extent in nearly all the districts of the State. Would that every teacher could have "spared the time," and devoted *one week* to the consideration of a subject second to no other in importance!

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\* This subject of, *How much can our schools accomplish? and what studies are adapted to all ages of scholars?* will be found treated more extensively in the *School Manual*.



## II.

## ADDRESSES AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE EVENINGS.

As the evening exercises were no part of the work allotted us by the State, you may not expect a report of them. Yet they are identified with the conventions, and a report that did not speak of them would be defective. We volunteered these services for several reasons. One was, there was not time during the day for saying many things which we thought ought to be said. Another reason was, it was the best time to discuss the subject of education in all its bearings, because on no other occasion could half as many parents and teachers be assembled to hear it discussed. And then we felt it was due to the citizens of the place who were at so much trouble and expense to entertain us, to give all who desired it an opportunity of hearing this subject presented. And the constantly increasing numbers who attended the meetings of the evening, attested the utility of the plan.

The blessings which our school system has conferred upon the State ; the extent to which our schools may be improved, and the means of their improvement ; the subject of school government, including the motives proper to be used to secure obedience and study ; the use of the rod, &c. ; the duties and responsibilities of both parents and teachers ; the structure and arrangement of school-houses ; the studies best adapted to our schools ; the necessity of the special training of school teachers for the profession of teaching ;—these were the prominent topics for the evening discussions. The general outlines of the addresses are all that I shall attempt to give in this report.

1. *The blessings of our School System.* Our school system is a good one, and we should not condemn, but improve it. Its founders were wise and good men, and sincerely desired that *all* should have the blessings of knowledge. Together with the house of worship, they erected the college and the school house, that some might be liberally educated for the professions, and *all* for the duties and rational enjoyments of life. Their example was the first the world had ever seen of an attempt to instruct the entire mass of the people. In this respect the views of the early colonists of New England were more than a century in advance of those of the leading men in any country of Europe. They reasoned—and the patriots of '76 reasoned in the same way—that if *all* the citizens of a State were rightly educated, they could govern, and in all ways take care of themselves, and save the expenses and the evils of kingships and nobilities. Experience has shown that they reasoned correctly. Our republic is no longer an experiment.

The school—brought within a mile of every family in the State—has been among the efficient means of educating the people. Family instruction, the pulpit, the press and the various efforts of intellectual and benevolent men, have done a noble work ; but without the school, these auxiliaries would have been less efficient. The blessings of our school system are seen in the peace, order, enterprize, wealth, virtue, intelligence and happiness of our State. Cultivated mind is active and inventive, and will ever find out or create the channels of wealth. Without waste of time or property it will adapt means to ends, economize in every thing, and thrive where ignorance will die. It will manufacture a productive soil out of sterile plains and rough and rocky hills, and cause the marts of commerce and wealth to spring up by the side of every stream. It has filled many of our States with large and thriving villages, and produced an equitable distribution of property, and the comforts of property, beyond what has ever before been witnessed in civilized nations.

That educated mind will sustain the institutions of freedom, institutions of the highest order of learning, and the institutions of religion, is now evident to all. And the conviction is universal in our country, that all valuable institutions are safer in the hands of a *well educated people*, than in the hands of a few men who can work their pleasure upon masses of ignorance. The school system of Connecticut has had a mighty influence in causing the comparatively lovely, moral and intellectual aspect of our State.



2. *The extent to which our schools may be improved, and the means of their improvement.* The question is sometimes asked, "If our school system has done so noble a work for the people, why is it not well enough as it is?" "Why not let it alone?" We make improvements in every thing else, and why not improve our schools? The system is good, but its results may be made far greater and more blessed. There *will be* progress—we *demand* progress—in the mechanic arts, in horticulture, in agriculture, in jurisprudence, in the medical and ministerial professions, in the standard of scholarship in our higher seminaries of learning, and intelligent parents will demand progress in common school education. Shall the school for the *people* be the only *stationary* thing in our Republic? When we talk of improvements in other things, we do not condemn what has been done. A man riding in the cars betrays a great weakness to speak contemptuously of the old one horse wagons;—without the wagon *first*, the car would not have been. Any man of reflection sees our Manchesters and our Lowells in the old quill-wheels and distaffs of our grandmothers. The schools that our fathers attended were good; their methods of teaching and the studies taught were good. *They* improved wonderfully upon what their ancestors deemed *good enough*. So shall we make still farther progress. Already many schools in this and other States have been improved a thousand per cent. There is vastly more, and more thorough study, a better moral discipline, and a higher order of mental culture, secured. And many parents in every town, as they learn that more *is* done in other places, and *can* be done in their own schools, will not be satisfied till it *is done*. The school houses recently built, the increasing attention paid to the selection of competent teachers, the response made to the efforts recently put forth to elevate our schools, demonstrate that progress is demanded; and by liberal measures on the part of the Legislature and the friends of education, progress will be seen.

It is difficult to prophesy *to what extent* our system of public instruction may be carried. Evidently all our schools can be made as good as the better portion of them now are. And this is doing something. In addition to having reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, geography, &c., *more thoroughly taught* than they now are in most schools, we may give all scholars the ability to write their own language correctly, a knowledge of natural and moral philosophy, algebra, geometry, the elements of chemistry, surveying and all that are commonly denominated the higher branches of study. Skillful and philosophical methods of teaching, a systematic course of study adapted to all ages of the scholars, a convenient and comfortable house, punctuality and regularity in the attendance of the school, and a little expense for apparatus, will secure all this. And with a fund, giving nearly a dollar and a half to every scholar, the people of Connecticut can well afford the little extra expense. And when once parents are convinced how much more their schools can be made to accomplish for their children, the expense will be most cheerfully met. *Expense?* Why it is the most profitable investment! The scholar, the parent and the State are the richer, in more senses than one, for every degree of progress made in a *right* education.

*How can this be done?* As every other work of the kind is done. Scatter facts and arguments and strong appeals broadcast over the State. Let there be frequent conventions of school teachers in the State, and public addresses in all our towns and school districts. Let school societies, and their annual meetings, discuss the subject of their schools, and require a faithful report of them. And let the Legislature do something to establish a seminary for teachers, in which those who engage in the work of instruction shall be specially trained for teaching, as other men are specially trained for the several professions, and for other departments of labor. Teaching—*skillful, efficient* teaching—is an *art* that demands special qualifications. States have ever deemed it important to aid in establishing colleges. Our own State has done much for this object. Why? Because educated men are a blessing to the community. And are not those teachers, who have under their care the eighty thousand children and youth of the State, a blessing? Or should they not have the opportunity of making themselves a blessing? True, we have many good teachers without a seminary. So were there many professional men of distinction who never went to college; and there are such men now. In consequence of what has been given to colleges, a student can



receive his education for about one-fourth of what it would have cost him if no endowments had been made. All we ask is, that a seminary may be established where teachers can obtain their education for teaching proportionably cheap. And if the *people* of the State would look into this subject, such a seminary would speedily exist. Such seminaries, or Normal schools, have long existed in several of the European States, and there are some in our own country. Such schools are indispensable for the elevation of the teacher's profession, and to place it where it deserves to stand in the esteem of the community.

3. *School government.* This subject occupied more time than any other. Many gentlemen had something to say upon it, for it embraced several questions of the utmost importance in the training of children. The school was viewed, not only as the place where knowledge and mental culture were to be acquired, but where *character* was to be formed. And the whole government of the school should be a course of moral discipline for the scholars. Next to the parents' influence is the influence of the teacher in moulding the character, intellectual and moral, of the rising generation. The teacher should be irreproachable in his conduct and language, and strive to form correct habits for his pupils, and instill into their hearts elevating moral sentiments. In his corrections and chastisements, he should have in view the good of the school; and if, in extreme cases of willful disobedience, he used the rod, it should be done, not in a passion, not to gratify any feeling of revenge, but done to correct the scholar. He should strive to the utmost to interest the whole school in study, so, if possible, they would have no time or inclination to be idle or disobedient. Be forbearing in all cases where the wrong did not result from intention or willfulness; and try *kindness* upon the *hearts* of the stubborn and vicious long before the *rod* is applied to the body.

Occasionally a teacher gave it as his experience that corporeal punishment was never necessary; but in every such case the teacher had the same school year after year. The indiscriminate and continual whipping practised in many schools, was severely condemned as useless and positively injurious. All degrading punishments, and such as were calculated to vex and madden the offender, rather than subdue and reform him, were to be dispensed with: e. g. making him hold out a large stick or book, plugging his jaws, pulling his hair, wringing his nose, making him hold down a nail, &c. If any corporeal punishment must be inflicted, let it be manfully and deliberately done.

Motives held out to scholars to secure study and obedience, calculated to promote rivalry, or necessarily to operate unjustly upon a portion of the class, were deemed useless and degrading. More study could be secured without them, a more pleasant state of feeling would prevail in the class, and there would be less danger of fostering those passions that make havoc of all moral character. A child that is constantly *hired*—with sugar plums or medals—in the family or in the school—to do what is required, suffers more in loss of principle than he gains in knowledge. Other and higher motives should be held out: obedience should be secured from a sense of right and duty; the *conscience*, and not the *palate* or the *vanity* of the child, should be cultivated, and then—"going in the way he is trained"—he will have some right principle of character to guide him in after life.

4. *Duties of Parents towards the school.* They should see that a convenient and comfortable house is provided; the seats of a proper height and structure; that ample provision is made for warming and ventilating the room; that their children are regular and punctual in their attendance, and promptly supplied with the necessary books; that the school is provided with simple articles of apparatus for illustrating the lessons; and that the teacher is furnished with every facility for carrying out an efficient system of teaching. Then they should heartily coöperate with the teacher in securing order and obedience. Be careful how they listen to the complaints of their children, or how they speak of the teacher before them. When they apprehend there is any thing out of the way in the school, they should converse with the teacher, and not with the children, respecting it. They should frequently pay short visits to their school, and in all ways manifest a deep interest in its welfare.



According to reports of the schools of the State, officially made, there is a loss of time, in consequence of the absence and tardiness of scholars, amounting to about one-third of the whole school period. And when we take into the account the interruptions of the school, and the loss of systematic training resulting from this irregularity and loss of time, it is quite within the bounds of truth to say, half the value of our schools is sacrificed. What could be done in college if such irregularity prevailed? But it is more important to have punctuality and system in the training of children, than it is in the training of young men. A teacher can do nothing effectually in systematizing his school and carrying out a plan of instruction for the classes, unless his scholars are constant in their attendance. Parents are verily guilty—they do their children and the school irreparable injury—in not attending to these things.

5. *The Responsibilities of Teachers.* As the duties of the teacher frequently came up for remark during the exercises of the day, they were not dwelt upon in the evening addresses, except when the subject of school government was under discussion. Teachers can do much to remedy the evils spoken of above. They are in all the families of the district, and by calling up the subject of school improvement; methods of teaching; the studies best adapted to develop and strengthen the mind at all stages of its progress; the value of school libraries and apparatus; how much more can be accomplished by having permanent teachers, and adopting a system of studies; structure of school houses, &c.—they can do much to awaken an interest among parents, and to elevate their schools.

Many other topics were brought before the meetings, and it is believed that no subject which was connected with common school education was entirely omitted. I have given a mere skeleton of the addresses—as much, probably, as you will deem wise to publish. I have only to remark, that there was harmony in the discussions of the evening, and all the speakers confined themselves to topics which bore directly upon the improvement of our schools. All expressed a high degree of satisfaction that the State had taken up the subject, and trusted that the people would sustain the Legislature in carrying out efficient means for the elevation of their schools. All parties were equally interested in the moral and intellectual training of the children and youth of the State, and our school system should continue to be—what it ever has been—the glory of Connecticut.

I must here express my thanks to the committees of the several towns where the schools are held, for their kindness and attention, in affording every facility to make the exercises profitable, and in doing so much for the comfort and happiness of all of us who attended the conventions.

Very respectfully, yours,

M. RICHARDSON.



COUNTY TABLE.—Aggregate of Districts, Teachers, Scholars, Revenue, Expenditure, &amp;c., for the School year ending June 5th, 1848.

COUNTIES.	Districts.		Schools.			Teachers.			Scholars.				Revenue.		Expenditure.								
	Whole number of districts.	Number paid during the year.	Number reporting.	Whole number of schools.	Number yet required.	Average number of months taught.	Number of male teachers.	Number of female teachers.	Average salaries of male teachers per month.	Average salaries of female teachers per month.	Number of male scholars.	Number of female scholars.	Number learning German.	Average number of scholars in each school.	Cost of teaching each scholar per month.	Amount of tax levied.	Received from the State appropriation.	Received from collector of school tax.	Cost of instruction.	Fuel and contingencies.	Cost of school house, purchasing, building, renting and repairing.		
Adams,	20	18	18	12	3	1.12	117	25	10	10	3,700	2,800	7	49	44	\$7,178 25	\$2,688 00	15,913 35	\$7,502 25	\$7,502 25	\$153 60		
Allegheny,	41	41	41	24	3	6.17	275	91	15	15	8,750	7,600	50	55	55	51,990 21	9,750 00	12,716 51	12,716 51	3,700 00	27,000 00		
Armstrong,	17	16	16	10	2	3.20	140	15	1	1	3,900	2,900	75	40	40	6,561 80	3,900 00	7,119 71	6,561 80	1,300 00	855 86		
Beaver,	23	23	23	10	1	1.15	106	78	17	17	5,000	3,800	253	49	41	8,312 75	3,800 00	7,704 27	8,200 00	800 00	637 97		
Bellford,	27	25	25	15	3	5.03	200	2	1	1	1,300	3,000	13	26	47	7,968 11	3,000 00	4,775 00	7,900 00	475 00	1,291 19		
Berks,	41	19	9	51	3	6.21	30	30	17	17	2,100	1,912	202	66	33	10,718 91	2,000 00	7,913 00	7,368 00	1,100 00	1,500 83		
Blair,	15	15	12	15	2	1.67	65	3	1	1	2,000	2,300	60	35	60	6,282 05	1,500 00	5,500 00	5,500 00	480 00	1,551 14		
Bradford,	25	31	31	12	6	6.71	117	273	13	1	5.44	5,700	4,900	100	36	6,321 08	3,700 00	5,380 71	9,750 41	315 41	1,112 27		
Bucks,	33	21	21	10	5	7.68	94	47	21	17	66	4,350	3,650	12	47	51	17,782 41	5,600 00	17,950 01	10,071 84	1,590 00	455 21	
Butler,	25	25	23	10	6	5.05	136	49	14	8	11	3,900	2,800	222	45	25	7,217 66	3,100 00	5,651 13	7,213 45	680 01	608 43	
Cambria,	13	13	13	97	9	3.11	88	6	18	15	33	2,200	1,850	95	38	63	5,490 67	1,717 00	3,863 65	4,457 00	221 06	602 21	
Carbon,	8	7	5	11	3	5.00	23	8	23	6	9	1,152	982	178	42	42	5,355 11	1,211 00	3,915 12	4,111 51	524 34	1,107 43	
Centre,	21	18	18	19	6	4.23	99	13	19	55	12	59	3,051	2,485	63	46	39	7,250 18	2,119 50	5,208 86	7,308 61	521 55	1,267 26
Chester,	49	48	47	250	17	6.00	216	105	19	13	03	7,397	5,722	41	74	74	26,485 11	6,711 00	22,684 76	25,580 61	2,727 81	2,070 89	
Clarion,	15	11	11	40	19	3.09	78	8	16	30	9	1,998	1,639	20	41	38	4,379 59	1,638 50	2,820 68	3,342 25	170 77	184 46	
Clearfield,	22	20	18	77	15	4.16	55	18	18	33	11	1,516	1,213	33	50	50	2,720 63	1,055 50	2,030 57	3,040 50	133 90	266 52	
Clinton,	18	15	11	45	6	5.02	33	13	19	31	12	37	931	779	42	64	2,129 96	811 50	2,661 46	2,264 00	440 16	291 59	
Columbia,	22	20	20	115	12	3.21	125	40	16	65	9	75	3,558	3,291	11	47	45	7,300 82	2,863 50	5,617 71	6,760 61	686 40	1,058 13
Crawford,	33	32	33	295	15	5.14	78	276	13	08	5	51	5,850	5,175	36	39	7,722 13	3,671 00	6,330 50	10,250 63	351 11	1,050 98	
Cumberland,	20	20	19	142	8	5.05	122	20	18	32	13	33	4,595	3,768	50	49	54	13,871 42	3,995 00	11,486 47	12,735 79	1,119 47	2,519 78
Dauphin,	22	20	20	116	11	4.25	135	12	20	41	14	51	4,546	3,667	120	55	41	14,620 47	3,651 50	7,212 23	13,909 02	1,179 39	1,872 58
Delaware,	21	21	20	66	5	7.06	61	12	22	47	17	52	2,285	1,548	—	42	56	12,780 36	4,123 00	11,652 27	10,773 37	1,002 88	1,347 39
Elk,	8	8	6	16	7	6.00	5	11	20	20	6	71	275	309	190	33	51	1,176 68	201 50	805 79	910 35	3 37	36 17
Eric,	25	25	25	201	5	6.25	170	295	13	45	9	43	5,420	4,903	5	36	36	9,115 56	3,431 50	8,718 19	11,086 43	628 76	1,032 16
Fayette,	23	22	21	154	8	4.11	131	16	17	35	13	06	4,085	3,199	40	42	46	10,094 03	3,472 50	9,411 65	9,462 50	614 73	3,437 07
Franklin,	17	16	16	175	9	5.00	165	13	16	08	13	20	5,285	4,288	86	50	37	12,359 17	4,600 50	11,254 04	14,790 45	1,213 45	1,866 16
Greene,	17	12	8	57	11	2.05	38	1	13	66	6	50	1,236	835	34	42	32	3,346 46	1,000 00	1,504 01	1,964 75	106 48	214 48
Huntingdon,	25	21	22	120	12	3.12	106	7	18	00	8	18	2,678	2,224	18	39	46	7,075 94	2,458 50	3,619 28	3,207 63	352 75	966 00
Indiana,	19	19	18	163	11	3.17	131	21	16	91	9	65	3,627	2,939	3	52	33	6,815 99	2,626 00	5,066 80	6,290 73	508 21	536 38
Jefferson,	16	15	14	76	19	4.21	46	29	18	45	8	04	1,920	1,466	—	37	45	3,571 61	947 00	2,179 73	2,337 08	232 06	756 88
Juniata,	10	10	10	78	4	3.24	72	10	15	28	12	04	1,066	1,601	92	39	59	3,839 47	1,508 50	2,714 66	4,079 93	301 28	624 21
Lancaster,	38	30	29	289	22	6.00	241	57	21	42	17	71	9,188	7,395	452	18	49	32,552 21	7,610 00	27,811 59	33,288 34	7,158 92	7,158 92
Lebanon,	13	7	7	62	3	5.05	56	6	16	19	15	20	1,955	1,482	313	47	38	5,157 02	1,341 00	5,003 50	4,317 43	375 10	510 45
Lehigh,	14	8	7	66	3	5.00	59	7	20	81	15	85	2,263	1,868	896	56	37	5,117 78	1,890 50	4,433 14	4,961 03	587 44	824 43
Luzerne,	37	31	32	211	20	5.00	136	114	15	66	6	71	4,954	4,325	91	43	49	7,501 22	3,951 50	5,411 15	9,433 72	561 41	2,164 96
Lycoming,	36	32	26	133	12	4.01	107	33	16	23	10	32	3,144	2,439	125	36	69	6,023 13	2,583 50	4,222 46	5,529 15	253 02	1,569 47
M'Kean,	12	10	11	41	10	6.19	19	52	14	00	5	35	581	547	10	27	64	1,639 91	408 50	1,191 50	1,556 53	121 52	99 75
Mercer,	22	22	19	225	22	5.12	168	161	14	03	6	75	4,719	4,280	140	41	38	7,780 87	4,156 50	5,127 60	4,978 80	601 13	2,218 63
Mifflin,	12	12	10	57	4	4.15	57	15	20	10	13	01	1,713	1,495	154	49	40	5,962 75	1,619 00	2,810 85	4,472 50	185 13	591 87
Monroe,	12	11	9	70	3	3.20	67	4	14	35	9	66	1,733	1,290	153	41	29	2,418 10	1,078 00	892 60	2,179 39	44 36	142 56
Montgomery,	34	17	17	96	4	8.00	81	21	23	02	16	63	3,956	3,171	103	52	49	17,253 79	3,502 00	14,328 18	16,708 75	1,716 17	1,053 74
Northampton,	18	18	16	154	11	6.00	140	22	19	62	10	60	4,482	3,475	1,620	52	55	9,993 15	4,180 50	8,480 68	10,051 84	791 47	445 46
Northumberland,	18	13	13	85	7	4.02	73	8	19	37	12	29	2,499	2,053	15	52	34	4,800 04	1,821 50	3,783 27	4,915 09	481 14	804 76
Perry,	18	18	18	122	6	3.15	129	8	16	60	9	00	3,238	2,923	24	46	40	5,635 02	2,302 00	4,175 29	4,877 50	385 53	930 55
Pike,	8	8	8	33	1	5.21	19	20	14	13	6	13	529	505	—	28	58	1,159 04	527 00	724 94	1,719 40	48 13	197 84
Potter,	20	18	13	52	8	6.18	19	53	13	15	5	28	719	711	14	26	61	2,142 90	631 00	1,261 94	1,287 15	112 31	620 39
Schuylkill,	30	18	12	71	13	7.07	57	18	26	34	15	70	3,396	2,446	39	75	34	18,286 59	3,001 50	11,461 67	14,892 21	1,552 73	8,343 76
Somerset,	19	15	16	135	6	3.15	134	3	15	31	8	50	3,345	2,484	104	49	37	2,663 77	5,256 82	2,663 77	5,256 82	191 43	287 06
Sullivan,	7	—	7	25	8	4.20	16	16	13	95	5	36	501	212	—	26	43	—	297 09	790 62	3 00	810 72	
Susquehanna,	26	26	26	221	4	6.06	134	222	12	54	5	26	4,307	3,758	27	35	52	5,935 28	2,718 50	5,225 52	9,011 87	61 85	266 60
Tioga,	23	23	23	167	22	5.15	100	150	13	54	5	73	3,837	3,320	—	45	32	5,037 07	2,189 00	3,471 49	5,411 92	245 02	807 01
Union,	18	14	13	98	7	4.00	95	5	18	18	12	68	2,861	2,032	500	53	40	5,193 06	2,221 50	3,216 02	4,234 85	358 39	180 27
Venango,	18	18	18	152	10	4.00	80	65	14	73	7	08	2,284	1,915	80	32	48	3,463 00	1,768 50	2,039 33	2,481 00	95 09	569 63
Warren,	18	17	17	121	10	5.10	56	109	14	32	6	11	1,913	1,847	—	30	53	3,216 91	1,228 00	2,302 44	4,898 79	283 00	2,025 37
Washington,	30	30	30	244	17	6.05	215	71	16	31	10	74	5,066	4,165	2	38	43	14,987 09	4,785 50	10,982 46	13,191 62	282 03	2,345 94
Wayne,	22	22	19	95	9	6.18	38	86	14	10	6	23	1,850	1,561	10	34	71	3,814 42	1,780 00	2,394 32	3,869 07	100 00	109 25
Westmoreland,	26	25	25	209	27	4.26																	



